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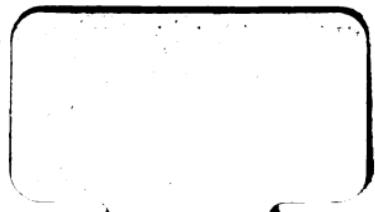
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CHARLES LAMB

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ESSAYS OF
CHARLES LAMB

SELECTED AND EDITED
WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY
GEORGE ARMSTRONG WAUCHOPE, M.A., PH.D.
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GINN & COMPANY

BOSTON · NEW YORK · CHICAGO · LONDON

Edu & T 5, Aug. 1907

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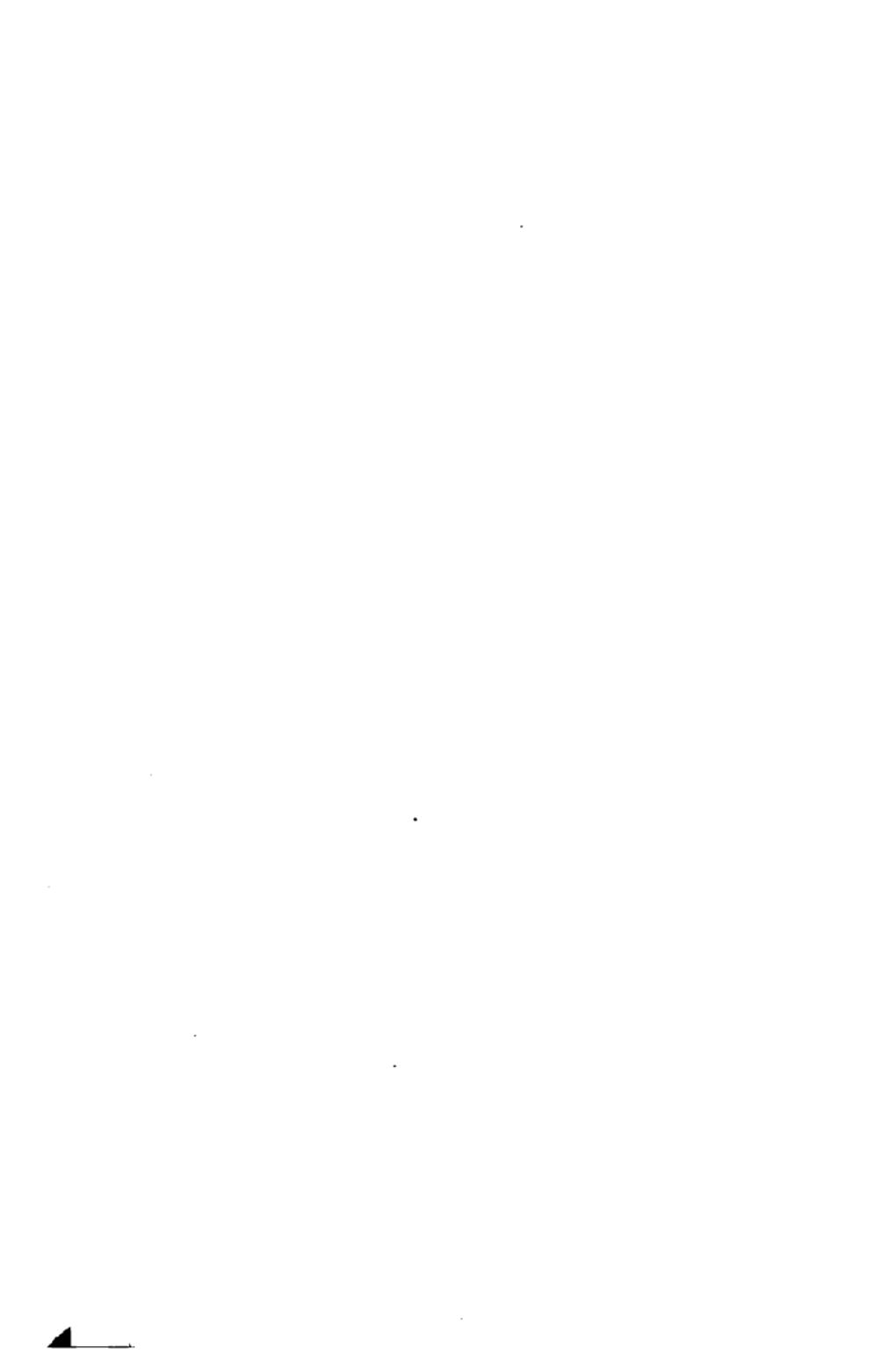
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The Athenæum Press
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TO
MY BELOVED COLLEAGUE AND REVERED FRIEND

Edward S. Joyner

CRITIC, LOVER, AND MASTER OF OUR MOTHER TONGUE
THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED
AS
A TOKEN OF GRATITUDE AND RESPECT



PREFACE

THE assertion of a number of eminent critics that English prose style reaches its climax in Charles Lamb has remained undisputed. If this high praise is deserved, Lamb should be regarded as one of our purest classics, and a subject for general academic study. It is, therefore, all the more a matter of surprise that no adequate school edition of *Elia* has hitherto appeared. I believe, in fact, that he has been neglected in the class room, but for what specific reasons, whether of subject or treatment, I am not prepared to say. The condition is truly remarkable in the case of one so universally beloved and by acclamation adjudged a supreme master of English.

I believe that Lamb is shortly coming into his own. Many signs of the times point in this direction. The aim of the present volume is to supply a substantial school and college edition of selected essays. Recognizing the numerous difficulties to be met, the editor has tried to make a book which shall prove adequate to the requirements of the class room. Not to infringe upon the rights of the teacher, the beautiful and pathetic story of Lamb's life has been left untold, and only a few suggestions as to methods of study have been made. To avoid similar sins against the student, the plan of not giving information that is easily accessible has been adhered to. The right of personal research — a wholesome stimulus to interest — is respected in this edition, but help is offered where help is needed. In criticism, analyses of style and structure, and in notes on recondite allusions, the book will, I believe, be found reasonably full.

After carefully collating four standard English editions of the *Essays of Elia*, the editor has followed closely the excellent text of Mr. Richard Herne Shepherd (London: Chatto and Windus, 1898), which has the advantage of being based directly on the text of the two volumes of 1823 and 1833, issued under Lamb's own eye. The spelling and the use of points and capitals is, therefore, substantially that approved by the author. Several passages which Lamb suppressed have been restored from the magazines in which the essays originally appeared, as the personal reasons that caused their omission now no longer exist. It has seemed best to retain Lamb's own notes on the text as footnotes. The miscellaneous critical papers are reprinted in the form in which they first appeared in the several magazines.

The section on works of reference, and specific acknowledgments in the Introduction and Notes, will sufficiently indicate the indebtedness of the editor, which is too multifarious to be here set down. A number of Lamb's allusions and quotations have defied all attempts of the editor to trace them, and any information throwing light on such passages will be gratefully appreciated.

G. A. W.

COLUMBIA, S. C.

February, 1904

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INTRODUCTION

I. CHIEF EVENTS OF LAMB'S LIFE

(Arranged chronologically)

1775 February 10, born in Crown-office Row, Temple, London.

1781 Pupil in William Bird's school in Fetter Lane.

1782-1789 October, enters Christ's Hospital ; schoolmates are Leigh Hunt and Coleridge ; becomes Deputy Grecian under Rev. James Boyer ; vacations spent at Blakesware in Hertfordshire.

1789? Receives clerkship in the South-Sea House ; love affair with Ann Simmons (1789-1795).

1792 April 5, appointed clerk in the East India House ; meetings with Coleridge at the "Salutation and Cat" Tavern ; sees Mrs. Siddons.

1795-1796 Takes lodgings in Little Queen Street, Holborn ; meets Robert Southey ; spends six weeks in madhouse at Hoxton.

1796 Lamb's sonnets published with Coleridge's poems ; September, Mary Lamb kills her mother and is confined in madhouse.

1797 Charles and Mary begin their "life of dual loneliness" ; visits to Southey in Hampshire and to Coleridge at Nether Stowey.

1798 Publication of *A Tale of Rosamund Gray* and *The Old Familiar Faces*.

1799 Meets Godwin and Manning ; revisits Hertfordshire.

1800 Removes with Mary to Chapel Street, Pentonville, where they are "shunned and marked" ; affair with Hester Savary ; removes to No. 16 Mitre Court Buildings in the Temple ; visits from and to Coleridge ; meets the Wordsworths.

1800-1803 Contributor to the *Morning Post*, *Albion*, and *Morning Chronicle*.

1802 Publication of *John Woodvil*, *Fragments of Burton*, and *Ballads*.

1805 Mary in asylum a month ; Lamb writes *Farewell to Tobacco*.

1806 Lamb's farce, *Mr. H.*, fails at Drury Lane Theater ; begins to give Wednesday-night parties.

1807 *Tales from Shakespeare* published jointly by Charles and Mary.

1808 *Adventures of Ulysses* and *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets* published.

1809 Takes lodgings at 34 Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, thence to chambers No. 4, Inner Temple Lane ; Wednesday-night parties flourish ; joint publication of *Mrs. Leicester's School* and *Poetry for Children*.

1810 Visit to Hazlitt at Winterslow ; visit to Oxford ; Mary in asylum.

1811 Publication of essays on *The Genius and Character of Hogarth* and *The Tragedies of Shakespeare* in the *Reflector* ; Gifford attacks Lamb in the *Quarterly Review*.

1815 Meets Talfourd ; visit from Wordsworth ; Mary in asylum ten weeks.

1817 Takes lodgings in Great Russell Street, Covent Garden ; meets the actors Munden, Elliston, and Miss Kelly.

1818 Publication of Lamb's *Complete Works* in two volumes (Chas. Ollier).

1822 Death of John Lamb ; trip to Paris ; writes *Confessions of a Drunkard*.

1823 *The Essays of Elia*, published by Taylor and Hessey ; controversy with Southey ; removes to a cottage in Colebrook Row, Islington ; writes *A Character of the Late Elia. By a Friend*, and seven essays for the *London*.

1825 March, Lamb retired on pension of £450 a year by the directors of the India House ; writes four essays for the *London*, a hoax *Memoir of Liston, Horns*, and *Letter to an Old Gentleman*.

1826 Writes for the *New Monthly Magazine*; writes *The Confidant*, a farce.

1827 Mary ill in asylum; removes to Chaseside, Enfield.

1828 Contributes *Popular Fallacies* to the *New Monthly*.

1829 Lodges at the Westwoods'; the stagecoach incident; Mary ill.

1830 Moxon publishes Lamb's *Album Verses*; Lamb removes for a short while to London, then returns to Enfield; Mary's illness increases.

1831 Contributes *Peter's Net* to the *Englishman's Magazine*.

1833 Lodges with Walden at Bay Cottage, Edmonton; Mary very ill and Charles' health poor; Moxon publishes the *Last Essays of Elia*.

1834 Death of Coleridge; death of Lamb, December 27, and burial at Edmonton.

1847 May 20, Mary dies in private asylum.

II. LAMB'S PERSONALITY AND INFLUENCE

De Quincey has remarked that in order to appreciate Lamb it is necessary to understand his character and temperament.¹ A knowledge of the man, his likes and dislikes, his whims, caprices, and fancies, is in fact the master key which alone will unlock the treasures of his writings. Charles Lamb was a most paradoxical character, and his personality is projected to a remarkable extent into all his literary work. The correct interpretation, therefore, of any particular passage may depend upon our insight into the peculiar bias of the writer's mind. The coy and wayward Elia should, of all essayists, be approached in a friendly and unprejudiced spirit. Recognizing this important personal equation, therefore, the student of Lamb should not lose sight of the unconscious reaction of his character and life on his work, and should set himself the pleasant task of

¹ De Quincey's *Works*, Vol. III, p. 53, Masson ed.

discovering and tracing out some of these hidden undercurrents of influence.

Lamb's most obvious trait was his artistic temperament, and a recognition of this fact by the student at the outset is fundamental. There was a touch of the bohemian in him which revealed itself in his tastes and habits. He showed a good-humored contempt for modern affectations and conventionalities, and cultivated the old-fashioned in speech and bearing. He was a lover of streets and shops, of libraries and theaters, of rare prints and first editions, of the cheerful glass and a rubber at whist. A scorner of the commonplace, he was an uncompromising enemy of Philistinism with its cant, self-satisfaction, and materialism. It is not strange that a man thus constituted should have created a style unique in literature, and made it an instrument adequate to the expression of his quaint and nimble mind.

As a balance to the artist in Lamb was a fine judicial poise of intellect. This wholesome quality saved him from the excesses of youthful enthusiasm. Like his friend Hazlitt, he was ever a seeker of essential truth. With the courage and confidence of a true philosopher, he retried all questions at the bar of his own reason; and rendered fresh verdicts based on justice, conservatism, and sympathy with the best in human nature.

Another quality inherent in Lamb was his magnanimity, along with its counterpart, modesty. He is egotistical, but with the gentle self-assertion which is fully justified by the worth and interest of his ideas. He never, however, takes himself or his views too seriously, and his very egotism is, like Falstaff's lying, felt to be merely a genial affectation of manner assumed for the double purpose of amusing himself and the reader.

Lamb was not lacking, as some have supposed, in the stuff of true manly courage. Many have been misled by the tender epithets of "frolic" and "gentle-hearted," given him by his friends, or by his own playful self-confessions, and have

ill-advisedly judged him weak, frivolous, and timid. He was, on the contrary, strong to suffer and endure. One need take only a cursory survey of his career to find such evidences of his fortitude in the face of petty annoyances and appalling misfortunes as should place him on the roll of the heroes of humble life. His exasperating impediment of speech, his bitter disappointment at being debarred from any congenial profession, the dreadful taint of insanity in his blood, his sister's madness with its tragic sequel and his voluntary self-sacrifice as her guardian, the constant vexations of business life, and the never-ending pinch of poverty and ill health,— all this was enough to excuse Lamb had he been the most morbid and fretful of men. On the contrary, his troubles served but to mellow a rarely sweet and happy disposition and rendered him more unselfish and benevolent. Since death removed the sacred veil of domestic sorrow, the world has known what caused the pathetic sadness in those eyes which were wont to twinkle with the most tricksy merriment.

It is equally true that Lamb possessed many so-called feminine traits. This bisexual nature, as Furnivall calls it in Shakespeare, is one of the most attractive characteristics of his imaginative mind. The bravest souls are the most tender. Mary Lamb was noted for her directness and common sense. In her brother, however, there was the suggestion of posing, an incorrigible fondness for make-believe, a mischievous playing with life which was delightful when one realized his reverence for its serious aspects. His favorite attitude to the reader is that of one chatting familiarly with a companion. Not even in his open letter to Southey in the famous controversy did he assume the air of the slashing critics of the day, and abuse or browbeat his opponent. His essays, though more polished than his letters, move in a plane scarcely more elevated than the epistolary. "They are all carefully elaborated," says Talfourd, "yet never were works written in a higher defiance to the

conventional pomp of style." Even when Lamb is argumentative he is never dogmatic. His purpose is not to demolish the position of an imaginary antagonist, but to win a friend's approving nod or foil the smile of incredulity. He rarely makes a categorical assertion of some matter of opinion except it be half in jest, and his whole bearing is persuasive and winning. He aims to entertain, not to arouse debate.

The Essays of Elia, being candidly personal in atmosphere and structure, contain a vast deal of autobiographical material. "In his various essays," says Nicoll, "he has left a faithful and true portrait of himself, with all of his out-of-the-way humour and opinions; and irresistibly attractive the portrait is."¹ What Lamb says of himself, however, should be accepted guardedly. He had, in Ainger's happy phrase, "a turn for the opposite." One cannot read too warily, for example, the sketch of his own character in his inimitable *A Character of the Late Elia. By a Friend*. There a charming and pardonable egotism is masked under a veil of self-depreciation. One must be circumspect indeed not to be entrapped by a man who can thus gravely preach his own funeral discourse.

Lamb was incorrigibly fond of hoaxing, mystification, and practical joking. He valued himself, in fact, on being "a matter-of-lie-man," believing truth to be too precious to be wasted upon everybody. His lying *Memoir of Liston* is a clever mock biography, which the public, misled by its jumble of fact and fiction, took seriously—to the immense amusement of the author. Nothing of the sort had been so successful since the appearance of *Gulliver's Travels*.² When the authorship of the *Waverley Novels* was a general subject of conjecture, Lamb told George Dyer in strictest confidence that they were the work of Lord Castlereagh, whereupon his innocent schoolmate hurried away to whisper it in the ear of Leigh Hunt, "who as

¹ Nicoll's *Landmarks of English Literature*, p. 368.

² See *Letter to Miss Hutchinson*, January 20, 1825.

a public writer ought to hear the latest news."¹ When Manning was about to return home from China after several years' absence, Lamb wrote a letter in which he tells him "not to expect to see the same England again which you left; few of your old friends will remember you;"² then mentioning the deaths of Mary, Coleridge, and Wordsworth, he adds that he himself is now in an asylum. The next day he wrote another letter correcting these dismal statements and mailed it to St. Helena to meet his friend on the way home. The spirit which prompted such pleasantries with intimate friends comes out in the essays in curious perversions of fact which serve the author's purpose of puzzling or shocking his readers.

Lamb showed his contemporaries how to combine business with culture. His example of industry, prudence, and independence was a wholesome one in an age when men of letters were notoriously visionary and unpractical. As a clerk he paid the most careful attention to business. So far as is known, no complaint was ever made of his being negligent in the performance of his duties, and his employers showed their appreciation of his services by granting him many leaves of absence, and finally retiring him on a handsome pension. He was at his desk in the India House punctually at ten and remained till four o'clock daily. He then returned to his rooms and dined with his sister at half-past four, after which he was in the habit of taking a long walk for exercise.

Lamb was essentially a town man, and was never quite at home off the streets of London. His essays picture the delights of city life much as Wordsworth's poems reveal the charms of country life. He confessed that he was "not romance-bit about nature," but felt "as airy up four pair of stairs as in the country." He was one "that loved to be at home in crowds."

¹ *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb*, Chap. IX, p. 359.

² See "Letter to Richard Manning," December 25, 1815, Talfourd ed., p. 268.

"Separate from the pleasure of your company," he wrote to Wordsworth, "I don't much care if I never see a mountain in my life. I have passed all my days in London, until I have formed as many and intense local attachments, as any of you mountaineers can have done with dead nature. . . . The wonder of these sights impels me into night walks about her crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fullness of joy at so much life. All these emotions must be strange to you ; so are your rural emotions to me."¹

With his high-strung nature, Lamb had his periods of depression as well as elation. His health was not uniformly good ; he was a great sufferer from nervousness and headaches, which were aggravated by office confinement, late hours, and imprudent diet. His low spirits show themselves less in the essays than in his letters, in writing which he solaced many dreary hours in the intervals of business. At times he felt himself hopelessly condemned to "the drudgery of the desk's dead wood," while opportunity for the employment of his literary tastes and talents continually receded. The burden of some of his letters is that he sadly lacked leisure, he was bothered by visitors whom he called "friendly harpies," he was so "smoky with last night's ten pipes" that he must leave off writing, and he was extra-worked auditing warehousekeepers' accounts in his "candlelight fog-den at Leadenhall." "My theory," said he to Wordsworth gloomily, "is to enjoy life but my practice is against it."

In arriving at a fair estimate of Lamb, we must take also into account the fact that he was disappointed in his early literary ambitions. He grew restless in the monotonous treadmill of daily toil ; yet this very drudgery saved him from a garret in Grub Street or the humiliating necessity of seeking a patron. Intellectual defeat was yet harder to bear. How bitter must have been his sense of failure as he successively

¹ "Letter to Wordsworth," January 30, 1801.

abandoned hope of winning renown in the alluring fields of poetry, fiction, the drama, and journalism. His mother's murder shattered his poetic aspirations ; his adherence to an unhealthy and decadent school of romance proved disastrous to *Rosamund Gray* ; the flimsy plots of *John Woodvil* and *Mr. H*— caused the first to fail of acceptance and the latter to be hissed from the stage ; and on account of his ignorance of politics combined with the impossible demands of the daily humorous paragraph, three party journals dispensed with his services.

His correspondence was the single field of literary activity which he found well suited to his peculiar bent. The composition of his letters, many of which were future essays in the rough, was good preparation for the more pretentious work of Elia in the *London*. All this early groping after a career in letters, however, unsatisfactory though it was, did serve as an indispensable training in style. Each effort contributed something to the formation of the wonderful whole : the verses refined his sense of rhythm and diction ; the journalism expanded his power of humorous observation ; the dramas sharpened his turn for dialogue and witty expression ; the stories developed his skill in narration and analysis of character ; and the letters furnished that friendly attitude to the reader which every one finds so attractive, and suggested an interesting class of subjects.

The influence of Lamb upon the literary life of his own time should not be overlooked. His Wednesday-evening parties are famous to this day. Next to the gatherings at the Holland House, those at Lamb's were the most interesting in London. The assemblages of distinguished men in the luxurious parlors of the noble lord were more brilliant and imposing ; but the men who met in the humble but hospitable chambers of Charles and Mary Lamb, and partook of their simple teas, contributed more to the intellectual life of the metropolis

and preserved the traditions of good comradeship associated with Raleigh's Club at the Mermaid and Dr. Johnson's at the Turk's Head. If there was more of politics at the earl's, there was more of literature at the clerk's. The company that met at Lamb's was not only homogeneous in spirit but was fairly representative of London life. Among the regular guests were Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt, Lloyd, Godwin, "Barry Cornwall," Robinson, Field, Dyer, Barnes, the editor of the *Times*, Admiral Burney, and the actors Liston and Charles Kemble. Occasionally Wordsworth, De Quincey, and Coleridge were present when they happened to be in town. Lamb's house was indeed a fountain head from which flowed a stream of criticism of art, literature, philosophy, religion, politics, and the stage, that fertilized the mind of young England to an extent of which the agents themselves were only half conscious.

In all that assemblage of gifted men it is no derogation to the visitors to say that their host was the most remarkable. Hood, Crossley, Procter, Patmore, and all who knew him, agree substantially as to his appearance. Talfourd has left us perhaps the best pen sketch of Lamb. "Methinks I see him before me now," he writes, "as he appeared then. . . . A light frame, so fragile that it seemed as if a breath would overthrow it, clad in clerk-like black, was surmounted by a head of form and expression the most noble and sweet. His black hair curled crisply about an expanded forehead; his eyes, softly brown, twinkled with varying expression, though the prevalent feeling was sad. . . . Who shall describe his countenance, catch its quivering sweetness, and fix it forever in words? Deep thought, striving with humour; the lines of suffering wreathed in cordial mirth; and his smile of painful sweetness, present an image to the mind it can as little describe as lose. His personal appearance and manner are not unfitly characterized by what he himself says in one of his letters to

Manning, of Braham, 'a compound of the Jew, the gentleman, and the angel.'"¹

In the home where Mary Lamb presided there was plain living and high thinking. The flow of soul, however, was not absent from this feast of reason. We turn again to Talfourd's delightful pen for this picture of one of the suppers. "Meanwhile Becky lays the cloth on the side-table, under the direction of the most quiet, sensible and kind of women, who soon compels the younger and more hungry of the guests to partake largely of the cold roast lamb or boiled beef, the heaps of smoking roasted potatoes, and the vast jug of porter. Perfect freedom prevails. . . . As the hot water and its accompaniments appear, and the severities of whist relax, the light of conversation thickens. Lamb stammers out puns suggestive of wisdom for happy Barron Field to admire and echo; the various driblets of talk combine into a stream, while Miss Lamb moves gently about to see that each modest stranger is duly served."²

Lamb was a man of strong appetite, over which he sometimes failed to exercise due restraint. His sister often wrote of his being "smoky and drinky." He was, like Chaucer's franklin, Epicurus' true son. His taste for pastries, roast pig, partridge, hare, and shoulder of mutton is evident from numerous allusions in his letters and essays. Taste is the sense least often appealed to by writers, but Lamb has succeeded in making some excellent literature out of the pleasures of the palate. Perhaps he thought it equally clever and far kinder to make the mouths of his readers water than their eyes. Whatever may have been his artistic or ethical motive, Elia's *Roast Pig*, *Chimney-Sweepers*, *Christ's Hospital*, *Grace before Meat*, and other savory papers, form a body of succulent literature which is little short of an apotheosis of the appetite.

¹ Talfourd's *Letters of Charles Lamb*, Chap. X, p. 257.

² *Final Memorials*, pp. 348, 349.

Elia was also addicted to the pipe and preferred the strongest varieties of "the great plant." He began the use of tobacco as a substitute for strong drinks, but the counter-attraction soon became a new form of slavery. In one of his moods of reformation he abjured the fragrant weed and wrote his lyric *Farewell to Tobacco*. Unhappily this proved but the first of a series of adieux to his "friendly traitress." On one occasion Doctor Parr, who smoked the mildest tobacco in a pipe half filled with salt, saw Lamb puffing furiously at a pipe crammed with the strongest mixture, and asked him how he had acquired the power of smoking at such a rate. Lamb replied, "I toiled after it, sir, as some men toil after virtue."

It cannot be denied that Lamb's most serious frailty was his habit of partaking too freely of alcoholic stimulants. He inherited a constitution which craved intoxicants, and this strengthened the temptation. In ales, wines, gin-and-water, he found temporary relief from bashfulness, low spirits, and the cares and sorrows of existence. A further effect was that they enabled him partly to overcome his stammering and to throw off the consciousness of other personal oddities. His system was so sensitive to their effects that a single glass sufficed to start the marvelous flow of wit and fancy. "It created nothing," says Patmore, "but it was the talisman that not only unlocked the poor casket in which the rich thoughts of Charles Lamb were shut up, but set in motion their machinery in the absence of which they would have lain like gems in the mountain or gold in the mine."¹

The same agent must be held responsible for the reckless buffoonery with which he sometimes entertained his company, and also the moods of perversity during which he made life a burden for the uncongenial. At such times he took delight in shocking strangers and confirming any unfavorable impression

¹ Barry Cornwall's *Charles Lamb: A Memoir*, p. 57.

by assuming an attitude of mockery or frivolity.¹ This explains the impression left on Macready and Carlyle. The great actor records with disgust "one odd saying of Lamb's that the last breath he drew in he wished might be through a pipe and exhaled in a pun." One can also readily see why Elia appeared to the stern Scotch seer "a sorry phenomenon," and his talk "contemptibly small and a ghastly make-believe of wit."² Lamb, however, lavished such a wealth of affection and pathetic tenderness on his sister and such a store of generosity and good comradeship on his friends, and kept his writings so free from all unpleasing notes, that his readers are only too willing to condone his shortcomings.

Of all Lamb's friendships that with Coleridge was the strongest and mutually the most helpful. Beginning at the Blue Coat School, it ripened as the years passed, and ended only with the death of the poet. It is one of the most beautiful in literary history. Coleridge encouraged Lamb to follow literature as an avocation, and published the first work of his friend with his own. Lamb amply returned the favor by giving Coleridge the benefit of his fine powers of criticism. The appreciation of the latter is evident in a letter written to Cottle in 1797, in which he says, "I much wish to send my 'Visions of the Maid of Arc' and my corrections to Wordsworth, who lives not above twenty miles from me, and to Lamb, whose taste and judgment I see reason to think more correct and philosophical than my own, which yet I place pretty high."³

After the fatal tragedy in 1796, Coleridge was the one friend to whom Lamb poured out all the anguish of his heart. "White, or some of my friends," he wrote, "or the public papers by this time may have informed you of the terrible

¹ See Hayden's *Autobiography and Journals*, p. 216.

² Carlyle's *Reminiscences*, p. 310.

³ Campbell's *Life of Coleridge*, p. xxxii. See also pp. 538 seq.

calamities that have fallen on our family. I will only give you the outlines: My poor, dear, dearest sister, in a fit of insanity, has been the death of her own mother. I was at hand only time enough to snatch the knife out of her grasp. She is at present in a madhouse, from which I fear she must be moved to an hospital. . . . My poor father was slightly wounded, and I am left to take care of him and my aunt. Mr. Norris, of the Blue Coat School, has been very kind to us, and we have no other friend; but, thank God, I am very calm and composed, and able to do the best that remains to do. . . . God Almighty have us well in his keeping!" In a later letter he tells of Mary's recovery and of her most affectionate and tender concern for what had happened.

The story of the "life of dual loneliness" and mutual devotion which the brother and sister led from this time until the death of Charles has hardly its parallel in fact or fiction. The guardianship of Mary was at once cheerfully assumed by Charles, who cared for the unfortunate woman henceforth with the most unselfish affection. Wherever they went they soon became "marked people," and were subjected to such petty annoyances and persecutions that they were obliged repeatedly to change their lodgings. At irregular intervals Mary suffered recurrences of her malady, which ever hung over them with its fearful shadow. Even when they ventured to indulge in a short excursion during Lamb's vacation, Mary took the precaution to have a strait-waistcoat carefully packed in their luggage. At last these seizures became so frequent and uncertain that they gave up their holiday trips. "Miss Lamb experienced," says Talfourd, "and full well understood, premonitory symptoms of the attack, in restlessness, low fever, and the inability to sleep; and, as gently as possible, prepared her brother for the duty he must soon perform; and thus, unless he could stave off the terrible separation till Sunday, obliged him to ask leave of absence from the office as if for

a day's pleasure — a bitter mockery ! On one occasion Mr. Charles Lloyd met them slowly pacing together a little footpath in Hoxton fields, both weeping bitterly, and found, on joining them, that they were taking their solemn way to the accustomed asylum.”¹

Mary, who was ten years older than Charles, became on her part the benefactress and guardian angel of his humble home, and looked after his comfort with tender solicitude. All who knew her admired her taste, tact, and good sense ; and, being herself gifted with no ordinary literary talents, she was able not only to preside as a gracious hostess at the Wednesday parties, but also to be her brother's helpful companion and inspiring collaborator. Something of the love and reverence which Charles Lamb felt for this noble woman may be read between the lines of a letter written to Dorothy Wordsworth in 1805. “ I have every reason to suppose,” he wrote, “ that this illness, like all Mary's former ones, will be but temporary. But I cannot always feel so. Meantime she is dead to me, and I miss a prop. All my strength is gone, and I am like a fool, bereft of her coöperation. I dare not think, lest I should think wrong ; so used am I to look up to her in the least and the biggest perplexity. To say all that I know of her would be more than I think anybody could believe or even understand ; . . . She is older and wiser, and better than me, and all my wretched imperfections I cover to myself by resolutely thinking on her goodness. She would share life and death, heaven and hell with me. She lives but for me.”²

“ Rich indeed in moral instruction,” says De Quincey, “ was the life of Charles Lamb : and perhaps in one chief result it offers to the thoughtful observer a lesson of consolation that is awful, and of hope that ought to be immortal, viz., in the

¹ *Final Memorials*, pp. 131–132 (October 3, 1796).

² *Works of Charles Lamb*, Vol. I, pp. 201–202, Talfourd ed.

record which it furnishes that by meekness of submission, and by earnest conflict with evil in the spirit of cheerfulness, it is possible ultimately to disarm or to blunt the very heaviest of curses — even the curse of lunacy.”¹

III. STYLE AND MATTER OF THE ESSAYS

Lamb's style is as unique and paradoxical as his personality. It possesses the amiable humor, the well-bred tone, the tender pathos, and the airy fancy which made the man so attractive. All that was weak, perverse, boisterous, or discourteous has evaporated in the processes of composition ; while his genial egotism, perfect humanity, piquant philosophy, the essential sweetness and light of his nature, remain crystallized. Ernest Rhys mentions admiringly “the many fine and rare graces to be found in Elia : the art, the fantasy, the charm of style, the exquisite sense of words, the temperamental faculty for literature at its highest and choicest attainment.”² Saintsbury pronounces him “the most exquisite and singular, though the least prolific, of the literary geniuses”³ whom the *London* boasted during its brief but brilliant career. To say the least, Lamb has by general consent made an exceedingly interesting and original contribution to English prose. His style is eclectic in spirit and composite in form. This is the secret of its structure, which though extremely illusive is susceptible of analysis.

Until his forty-fifth year Lamb was engaged in tentative and 'prentice work, none of which would have given him a high permanent reputation. It was only with the establishment of the *London* in 1820 that he found the proper vehicle for his

¹ De Quincey's *Works*, Vol. V, p. 220, Masson ed.

² *Essays of Elia*, Introduction, p. xiv (Camelot Series).

³ Saintsbury's *History of Nineteenth-Century Literature*, p. 181.

genius. The fortunate opening was industriously taken advantage of, and during the next thirteen years there appeared in the *London* and other periodicals that series of *Essays of Elia* upon which his title to an immortality of fame now securely rests. It is not strange that so gifted a person should have invented for his use a special instrument which was perfectly adequate to the expression of his inimitable mind.

One of the earliest impressions made on the student of these essays is the author's apparently haphazard and incongruous choice of themes. Closer investigation, however, will disclose the fact that all the subjects group themselves under three or four general heads. One class is *antiquarian*, and includes such papers as *The South-Sea House*, *Christ's Hospital*, and *The Old Benchers*; another is *social*, examples being *Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist*, *Imperfect Sympathies*, *Grace before Meat*, and *Old China*; a third is *critical*, and discusses topics of general or philosophic interest, such as *Sanity of True Genius* and *Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading*. Under this classification are found personal reminiscences, character sketches, bits of folklore, poetical rhapsodies, and criticism. Lamb followed the custom of the *Spectator* in choosing subjects of interest to the unprofessional reader, such as holidays, witches, religion, plays, relatives, cooking, newspapers, china, famous places and people. Self-confidence was shown in the selection of these familiar and often commonplace topics, for any failure here in freshness of style or originality of thought would have been conspicuous, perhaps fatal. Elia hands down to the nineteenth century the best traditions of the popular eighteenth-century periodical essay. "He showed," says Saintsbury, "how the occasional in literature might be made classical." He is "an epitome of the lighter side of *belles lettres*," and often something more, for in addition to entertaining us he teaches us to observe, to analyze, to philosophize.

It is important to take into account the external influences, as well as the more hidden springs of thought and feeling, which helped to mold his style. As to conventional form, as well as in choice of subject, he followed the type of the personal essay found in the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*. Steele and Addison were pioneers in making good literature of the chitchat of the tea table and the weightier talk of the coffee-house, and thus beguiled the illiterate fops and fine ladies into a love of reading. Lamb and the other Cockney essayists were the heirs of all this literary experience, but they made important additions to their heritage. To the wit, correctness, philosophy, and common sense of the eighteenth century they added the warmth, geniality, freedom, and individuality of the nineteenth.

For Lamb's masters in style and his intellectual affinities we must go back to an earlier period. "What appears to the hasty reader artificial in Lamb's style," says Ainger, "was natural to him. For in this matter of style he was the product of his reading, and from a child his reading had lain in the dramatists and generally in the great imaginative writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Shakespeare and Milton he knew almost by heart; Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, Ford, and Webster were hardly less familiar to him; and next to these, the writers of the so-called metaphysical school, the later developments of the Euphuistic fashion had the strongest fascination for him. When the fantastic vein took the pedantic-humorous shape, as in Burton; or the metaphysical-humorous, as in Sir Thomas Browne; or where it was combined with true poetic sensibility, as in Wither and Marvell,—of these springs Lamb had drunk so deeply that his mind was saturated with them. His own nature became 'subdued to what it worked in.' For him to bear, not only on his style but on the cast of his mind and fancy, the mark of these writers, and many more in whom genius and eccentricity went together, was no

matter of choice. It was this that constituted the 'self-pleasing quaintness' of his literary manner."¹

The surprising range and variety of Lamb's subjects are an index of his mental activity and breadth of sympathy; but the complex and heterogeneous elements that enter into his style reveal his sensitiveness to language and his capacity for absorbing without loss of originality the best that had preceded him. His mind may be thought of as a magic alembic which had the virtue of distilling a variety of strange simples into a new quintessence beautiful and aromatic. Henry Nelson Coleridge in the *Etonian* asserts that "Charles Lamb writes the best, purest, and most genuine English of any man living. For genuine Anglicism, which amongst all other essentials of excellence in our native literature is now recovering itself from the leaden mace of the *Rambler*, he is quite a study; his prose is absolutely perfect, it conveys thought without smothering it in blankets."² His style kept pace in flexibility with the versatility of its author, and readily adapted itself to the matter in hand. Thus each theme with its respective mood finds a natural and effective garb, yet the peculiar, unmistakable touch of Lamb is never absent. It is not exaggeration to say that in him English prose style reached its climax, and this view is now generally accepted.

Lamb is one of our most bookish writers. His essays have something suggestive of the musty odor of old folios, always the atmosphere of the study. He felt the lack of the highest university training, and laid no claim to profound scholarship. Few of his essays, however, fail to show industrious browsing in that rich pasturage of Samuel Salt's library. The works of the poets, rhetoricians, and playwrights of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were his "midnight darlings." It was in their fields that he loved to glean. His habit of keeping

¹ *The Essays of Elia*, p. vii, Ainger ed.

² *Ibid.*, p. iv.

scrapbooks, in which he copied selections from his favorite authors, enabled him to make a ready use of the best of what he had read. Lamb is an inveterate but happy quoter, and many of his quotations are difficult to trace. Some are taken from obscure nooks and crannies of literature but little explored by even the bookworms of our day. An examination of his method of weaving in choice pieces from other authors will disclose some interesting facts. Sometimes he quotes inaccurately or paraphrases as if from memory; again he deliberately changes the language to suit his context; often he merely suggests some familiar passage by a delicately allusive phrasing. His style holds in solution a sufficient amount of recondite allusion and scholarly reference to please the most learned, and at the same time it delights the general reader with its racy, idiomatic English and its many echoes of the language of the Bible. Thus there are in Lamb's style, aside from its substance, many elements that make for permanency.

Lamb's usual manner is the conversational. The long literary correspondence which he conducted with Coleridge, Wordsworth, Manning, and others was his best training school. We have seen how many of his letters are little essays in the germ. The essays were composed slowly and with the utmost pains. They were not hastily and carelessly dashed off. Their author was a master of the art that conceals art, and though the whole result may be easy and familiar, each sentence and paragraph has received the skillful manipulation of the trained stylist. The discursive structure of the essays, the frequent digressions, the parentheses, and the abrupt transitions are but devices to give them an easy, unconventional tone. The normal plane in writing gives opportunity for that rise and fall in feeling which afford relief from monotony, like the use of light and shade in art. The reader imagines himself listening quietly to the fascinating talk of a beloved companion who for the most part chats delightfully in a witty or sentimental mood, with

many half-whispered asides, but who now and then warms with his theme and rises eloquently into heights of rhapsody or apostrophe.

The quality that has given Lamb his distinctive place in the development of English prose is his *humor*. He was a humorist in the old historic sense, his humor being the outgrowth of his character, and also a talent which he strove to improve by cultivation. There was besides a vast deal of wisdom in his wit. As other men have labored to become profound or eloquent, so Lamb studied to be humorous. He devoted himself painstakingly to placing this gift upon a refined and intellectual plane. His habit of making quips on serious matters led the critical to charge him with masquerading as a man who took himself as a joke, but his friends knew that he "wore a martyr's heart beneath his suit of motley and jested that he might not weep." Besides, in following his natural bent, he was true to his best instincts. Of all the English humorists he most resembles Sir Thomas Browne and Thomas Fuller, two of his favorite authors. His bizarre vocabulary, coinages from the Latin, and his turn for the quaint and unexpected are characteristics which he has in common with the author of *Religio Medici*; his fondness for verbal quips, figures, and extravagant conceits reminds us of *The Worthies of England*. Coleridge's remark on Fuller that "his wit was the stuff and substance of his style" applies equally well to Lamb. When we compare the letters with the essays we see a tendency and a growth, for Elia is the outcome of the habit of seeing and presenting things humorously.

Lamb's humorous effects are produced in such a variety of ways that one must read a good deal of him to appreciate his versatility. We can indicate here only a few of his many devices for getting fun out of a subject. His title of the "Last of the Elizabethans" is nowhere better justified than in his fondness for verbal humor. He delights in words, and

revives the literary standing of the long-neglected pun and the conceits so much in vogue in the days of Llyl and Sidney. He thus reveals many latent resources of our vocabulary and lends fresh interest to the dictionary. We suddenly come across such strange words as hobby-dehoys, manducation, periegesis, orgasm, traydrille, obolary, and deodands, and discover that he is using learned or unusual terms to dignify the commonplace. Less original but very happy is his use of the simile, where he expresses his aversion to dying, "I am not content to pass away like a weaver's shuttle." Again, what an indescribable flavor is imparted to his paper on *Poor Relations* by dropping into the archaic style, "He casually looketh in about dinner-time," etc.

Lamb revels in exaggeration, hyperbole, and the mock heroic, and he frequently indulges in burlesque, anticlimax, and caricature. One leading form of his humor depends upon some oddity or incongruity of character. How delightful is the sophistry in the thesis that "the title to property in a book is in exact ratio to the claimant's powers of understanding and appreciating the same." How gravely he asserts that "a man cannot have a pure mind who refuses apple-dumplings," and how equally cheerfully he announces that a certain undertaker "lets lodgings for single gentlemen." "Amanda, have you a *midriff* to bestow?" illustrates his use of burlesque; the burning of the cottages for the purpose of roasting pigs, the mock heroic; and his reference to Locke in the same connection, the ironical. A specimen of tender and unexpected humor is the remark about himself and his sister that "we are generally in harmony, with occasional bickerings—as it should be among near relations." Ainger aptly calls this "the antithesis of irony,—the hiding of a sweet after-taste in a bitter word."

"No one describes," says Hazlitt, "the manners of the last generation so well as Mr. Lamb; with so fine, and yet so formal an air; with such vivid obscurity; with such arch

piquancy, such picturesque quaintness, such smiling pathos."¹ Lamb has left, at least in his essays, no full-length portraiture of character. This is not to be expected. In lieu of this he has drawn a whole gallery of pastels or pen-and-ink sketches, — delightful Jonsonese studies of every man in his humor. In his characterization Lamb is neither a satirist nor a caricaturist; there is nothing purposely distorted or exaggerated about his figures. He does not conceal any oddity of dress or manner, he does not hesitate to call attention to any idiosyncrasy whether ludicrous or admirable; but he goes further, and with keen insight and a sweet and gentle sympathy he makes us feel the essential humanity of the person described.

He has a faculty nothing short of genius of suggesting character by a few rapid touches. How quickly we become acquainted with the formal John Tipp, swearing at his little orphans, whose rights he is guarding with absolute fidelity; or the noble and sensible Bridget Elia, whose presence of mind, though equal to the most pressing trials of life, sometimes deserts her upon trifling occasions. There, too, is the mendacious voyager, himself fictitious, who perfectly remembers seeing a phoenix in his travels in upper Egypt. And, best of all, we repeat the opinions of that rigorous, strenuous old dame, Mrs. Battle, who next to her devotions loved a good game of whist. Like Dickens, Lamb dissected the humors of his characters with a loving hand; there was no malice in his smile and his sarcasm was only arch pleasantry. "Seeking his materials," says Talfourd, "for the most part in the common paths of life, often in the humblest, he gives an importance to everything, and sheds a grace over all." In the unpretentious department of miniature painting Lamb is an artist of the first rank.

The scope of this introduction does not admit of an extended discussion of all Lamb's literary output. His letters, poems,

¹ Hazlitt's *Spirit of the Age*, p. 114.

plays, translations, and short stories must remain uncriticized. Space remains for only a few remarks on his work as a critic. Although widely read and endowed with rare insight and a sensitive taste, his limitations as a critic were serious and fundamental. His opinions of men, books, paintings, plays, and the conduct of life are based rather on sentiment and prejudice than on reason and technical considerations. His judgments, therefore, are often unreliable and open to objection, and so are mainly interesting because of their striking originality and finished style. Lamb's method is impressionistic; he has almost nothing in common with the more recent school of scientific criticism represented by Matthew Arnold. Leaving out the biting satire and cruel personalities of Jeffreys, Gifford, and Wilson, Lamb is much like his contemporary reviewers. Some of the whimsical and paradoxical elements of the Elia essays are found also in the critical papers.

Lamb's merits as well as his limitations as a critic of art are seen in his essay *On the Genius and Character of Hogarth*. This is a case of special pleading, and was written to vindicate the noble qualities of the painter's work. The classical school of artists had attacked Hogarth on the charge that he was a mere caricaturist, a defective draughtsman, and that he showed slight knowledge of the human figure. In defense of his favorite, Lamb takes the high ground that Hogarth was a great satirist and moralist, and that he aimed to make a series of realistic and dramatic drawings which should depict life in all its vigor and variety. What attracted Lamb was the story in the pictures overflowing with the humor and pathos of humanity. Therefore what seemed to others grotesque and horrible was to him amusing or sublime. He ran the risk of damaging his cause by overstatement, as with the print of *Gin Lane*, where he missed the real meaning of the picture. He judged as a novelist, not as a painter, and found in the drawings only what he wished to find there. As a critic of

art he is unconvincing because of his ignorance of technical matters, but his interpretation of the moral power of any particular work is stimulating and therefore valuable.

In the realm of literature Lamb's critical faculty was delicate and penetrative. Here again the 'personal equation appears, for the value of his remarks depends largely upon his like or dislike of the author under consideration. For this reason his judgments of his contemporaries are unreliable except in the case of friends. "Where his heart was," says Ainger, "there his judgment was sound. Where he actively disliked, or was passively indifferent, his critical powers remained dormant." It is to be expected that he would be unappreciative of most of the writers of his own day. He admired Coleridge more than Wordsworth, and cared nothing for Scott, Shelley, or Byron, whom he did not know personally.

Lamb's position as a critic now rests on his choice bits of criticism of the writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, particularly the dramatists contemporary with Shakespeare. In his brief comments on the characters in the principal plays of this period is revealed a mind remarkable for its poetic sensitiveness and interpretative imagination. In his longer critical papers he prefers to take a narrow field and an unusual point of view. It is therefore important for the reader to get at the precise question which Lamb proposes to argue in each case, otherwise his position will seem absurd. Thus in his *Shakespeare's Tragedies* he discusses certain limitations of the stage, and makes an admirable argument on the proposition that there are intellectual qualities in dramatic poetry which cannot be interpreted by the actor's art.

The time has come when, by eliminating all that does not make for permanence, we can fairly estimate Lamb's contribution to English prose; and we may confidently assert that his niche in the pantheon of famous authors is definite and secure. The happy originality of his genius renders him

singularly free from unfavorable comparison with previous writers, from contemporary rivalry, and from the fluctuations of critical judgments in the future. All now unite in awarding him high praise for the leading part which he bore in the rediscovery of the rich treasures of the Elizabethan drama, and in the recrudescence of the quaint style of the humorists and philosophers of the seventeenth century. Furthermore, his inspiring example of combining business and culture in the face of appalling difficulties has made him personally the best beloved man in our literary history. The *Elia* papers justly take an honored place in the long succession of periodical essays that adorn the language. As an expression of their author's genial, elastic, and reflective mind they are marvelously perfect, and alone would entitle Charles Lamb to a secure place among the immortals.

IV. LIBRARY REFERENCES

I. *Editions.* There are several complete editions of Lamb's writings, the fullest and most satisfactory being Fitzgerald, *Life, Letters, and Writings of Charles Lamb* (1876) in 6 vols.; Ainger, *Works of Charles Lamb* (1883-1888) in 6 vols.; and Crowell, *Works of Charles Lamb* (1882) in 5 vols., now out of print. Included in the last-named edition are "The Letters of Charles Lamb with a Sketch of His Life" (1837) and "The Final Memorials of Charles Lamb" (1848), both by Talfourd, and both authoritative works having the interest and value of autobiography.

Ainger, *Letters of Charles Lamb* in 2 vols., is the best collection of his correspondence. The cheapest one-volume edition complete is Shepherd's, published by Chatto and Windus. A centenary edition of his complete works was published by Routledge. Moxon's edition was one of the earliest, but does not include the letters. Among the best editions of the *Essays of Elia* are Ainger's (containing many interesting notes for the general reader); Walter Scott's, with a brief introduction by Ernest Rhys (no notes); Chatto

and Windus'; Kent's (notes few and inaccurate); and Bliss Perry's "Selections from Lamb" in his *Little Masterpieces*. None of the foregoing editions are intended for students. W. Carew Hazlitt compiled a useful volume entitled *Charles and Mary Lamb: Poems, Letters, and Remains* (1874).

II. *Biography and Criticism.* Ainger's *Charles Lamb* (1882) in the "English Men of Letters" series is the most important life of Lamb, and contains a full analysis and criticism of his works. The introduction to the same author's edition of the *Essays of Elia* is an admirable critique. A good short life of Lamb, combined with criticism, by the same writer, is found in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. XXX, pp. 423-429. De Quincey's biographical sketch in his complete works, Vol. V, pp. 215-258 (Masson ed.), is the most eloquent and philosophical monograph on Lamb. *Charles Lamb: A Memoir* (1866) by Procter (Barry Cornwall) has much original material. Cradock's *Charles Lamb*, Peabody's *Charles Lamb at his Desk* (1872), and Marten's *In the Footprints of Charles Lamb*, are all full of personal interest and background.

Saintsbury's estimate of Lamb in his *History of Nineteenth-Century Literature* (1896) is just and penetrative. Swinburne's "Charles Lamb and George Wither" in his *Miscellanies* (1895) is a brilliant and enthusiastic study of Lamb as a critic. Mrs. Oliphant's discussion of Lamb in her *Literary History of England* (1894), Vol. II, pp. 1-18, is merely a repetition of Talfourd's impressions. Bliss Perry's little essay in his "Selections" is fresh and suggestive. The last chapter of Hazlitt's *Spirit of the Age* (1825) is a glowing appreciation. The same writer's beautiful essay *On Persons One Would Wish to Have Seen* narrates the conversation at one of Lamb's parties.

Much interesting anecdote and critical comment will be found scattered through the following books: Gilchrist's *Life of Mary Lamb*; Sandford's *Thomas Poole and his Friends* and *Elia and Geoffrey Crayon*; Haydon's *Autobiography and Journals* (1853); H. C. Robinson's *Diary*; Leigh Hunt's *Autobiography* (1850); Thomas Hood's *Literary Reminiscences* (1839); P. G. Patmore's *My Friends and Acquaintances* (1854); W. C. Hazlitt's

Memoirs of William Hazlitt (1867); Mrs. Matthews' *Memoir of Charles Matthews* (1838); Cottle's *Early Recollections of Coleridge* (1837); Gillman's, Campbell's, and Alsop's biographies of Coleridge; Southey's *Life and Correspondence*; Barton's *Poems, Life, and Letters* (1849); and Augustine Birrell's *Obiter Dicta* (1887).

The following magazine articles show considerable research: "The Sad Side of the Humorist's Life" in *Littell*, January, 1832; Mary Cowden Clarke's "Recollections of Mary Lamb" in the same magazine for April, 1858; "Charles Lamb and Sydney Smith," a strong piece of comparative criticism, in the *Atlantic*, March, 1859; "Concerning Charles Lamb" in *Scribner's*, March, 1876; and "Gleanings after his Biographers" in *Macmillan's*, April, 1867.

The most complete bibliography of Lamb is that by E. D. North, appended to Marten's *In the Footprints of Charles Lamb* (1890).

ESSAYS OF ELIA

I. A CHARACTER OF THE LATE ELIA

By a FRIEND

THIS gentleman, who for some months past had been in a declining way, hath at length paid his final tribute to nature. He just lived long enough (it was what he wished) to see his papers collected into a volume. The pages of the London Magazine will henceforth know him no more. 5

Exactly at twelve last night, his queer spirit departed ; and the bells of Saint Bride's rang him out with the old year. The mournful vibrations were caught in the dining-room of his friends T. and H., and the company, assembled there to welcome in another First of January, checked their carousals in mid-mirth, and were silent. Janus wept. The gentle P——r, in a whisper, signified his intention of devoting an elegy ; and Allan C., nobly forgetful of his countrymen's wrongs, vowed a memoir to his *manes* full and friendly as a "Tale of Lyddalcross." 15

To say truth, it is time he were gone. The humour of the thing, if there was ever much in it, was pretty well exhausted ; and a two years' and a half existence has been a tolerable duration for a phantom.

I am now at liberty to confess, that much which I have 20 heard objected to my late friend's writings was well-founded. Crude they are, I grant you—a sort of unlicked, incondite things—villanously pranked in an affected array of antique modes and phrases. They had not been *his*, if they had been

other than such ; and better it is, that a writer should be natural in a self-pleasing quaintness, than to affect a naturalness (so called) that should be strange to him. Egotistical they have been pronounced by some who did not know, that 5 what he tells us, as of himself, was often true only (historically) of another ; as in a former Essay (to save many instances) — where under the *first person* (his favourite figure) he shadows forth the forlorn estate of a country-boy placed at a London school, far from his friends and connexions — in direct opposition to his own early history. If it be egotism to imply and twine with his own identity the griefs and affections of another — making himself many, or reducing many unto himself — then is the skilful novelist, who all along brings in his hero, or heroine, speaking of themselves, the greatest egotist 15 of all ; who yet has never, therefore, been accused of that narrowness. And how shall the intenser dramatist escape being faulty, who doubtless, under cover of passion uttered by another, oftentimes gives blameless vent to his most inward feelings, and expresses his own story modestly ?

20 My late friend was in many respects a singular character. Those who did not like him, hated him ; and some, who once liked him, afterwards became his bitterest haters. The truth is, he gave himself too little concern what he uttered, and in whose presence. He observed neither time nor place, and 25 would e'en out with what came uppermost. With the severe religionist he would pass for a free-thinker ; while the other faction set him down for a bigot, or persuaded themselves that he belied his sentiments. Few understood him ; and I am not certain that at all times he quite understood himself. He 30 too much affected that dangerous figure — irony. He sowed doubtful speeches, and reaped plain, unequivocal hatred. — He would interrupt the gravest discussion with some light jest ; and yet, perhaps, not quite irrelevant in ears that could understand it. Your long and much talkers hated him. The

informal habit of his mind, joined to an inveterate impediment of speech, forbade him to be an orator ; and he seemed determined that no one else should play that part when he was present. He was *petit* and ordinary in his person and appearance. I have seen him sometimes in what is called good company, but where he has been a stranger, sit silent, and be suspected for an odd fellow ; till some unlucky occasion provoking it, he would stutter out some senseless pun (not altogether senseless perhaps, if rightly taken), which has stamped his character for the evening. It was hit or miss 10 with him ; but nine times out of ten, he contrived by this device to send away a whole company his enemies. His conceptions rose kindlier than his utterance, and his happiest *impromptus* had the appearance of effort. He has been accused of trying to be witty, when in truth he was but strug- 15 gling to give his poor thoughts articulation. He chose his companions for some individuality of character which they manifested.—Hence, not many persons of science, and few professed *literati*, were of his councils. They were, for the most part, persons of an uncertain fortune ; and, as to such 20 people commonly nothing is more obnoxious than a gentleman of settled (though moderate) income, he passed with most of them for a great miser. To my knowledge this was a mistake. His *intimados*, to confess a truth, were in the world's eye a ragged regiment. He found them floating on the sur- 25 face of society ; and the colour, or something else, in the weed pleased him. The burrs stuck to him — but they were good and loving burrs for all that. He never greatly cared for the society of what are called good people. If any of these were scandalized (and offences were sure to arise), he could not 30 help it. When he has been remonstrated with for not making more concessions to the feelings of good people, he would retort by asking, what one point did these good people ever concede to him ? He was temperate in his meals and

diversions, but always kept a little on this side of abstemiousness. Only in the use of the Indian weed he might be thought a little excessive. He took it, he would say, as a solvent of speech. Marry—as the friendly vapour ascended, how his 5 prattle would curl up sometimes with it ! the ligaments, which tongue-tied him, were loosened, and the stammerer proceeded a statist !

I do not know whether I ought to bemoan or rejoice that my old friend is departed. His jests were beginning to 10 grow obsolete, and his stories to be found out. He felt the approaches of age ; and while he pretended to cling to life, you saw how slender were the ties left to bind him. Discoursing with him latterly on this subject, he expressed himself with a pettishness, which I thought unworthy of him. 15 In our walks about his suburban retreat (as he called it) at Shacklewell, some children belonging to a school of industry had met us, and bowed and curtseyed, as he thought, in an especial manner to *him*. "They take me for a visiting governor," he muttered earnestly. He had a horror, which he 20 carried to a foible, of looking like anything important and parochial. He thought that he approached nearer to that stamp daily. He had a general aversion from being treated like a grave or respectable character, and kept a wary eye upon the advances of age that should so entitle him. He 25 herded always, while it was possible, with people younger than himself. He did not conform to the march of time, but was dragged along in the procession. His manners lagged behind his years. He was too much of the boy-man. The *toga virilis* never sate gracefully on his shoulders. The impressions of 30 infancy had burnt into him, and he resented the impertinence of manhood. These were weaknesses ; but such as they were, they are a key to explicate some of his writings.

[He left little property behind him. Of course, the little that is left (chiefly in India bonds) devolves upon his cousin

Bridget. A few critical dissertations were found in his *escri-
toire*, which have been handed over to the editor of this
magazine, in which it is to be hoped they will shortly appear,
retaining his accustomed signature.

He has himself not obscurely hinted that his employment 5
lay in a public office. The gentlemen in the export depart-
ment of the East India House will forgive me if I acknowledge
the readiness with which they assisted me in the retrieval of
his few manuscripts. They pointed out in a most obliging
manner the desk at which he had been planted for forty years ; 10
showed me ponderous tomes of figures, in his own remarkably
neat hand, which, more properly than his few printed tracts,
might be called his "Works." They seemed affectionate to
his memory, and universally commended his expertness in
book-keeping. It seems he was the inventor of some ledger 15
which should combine the precision and certainty of the Italian
double entry (I think they called it) with the brevity and
facility of some newer German system ; but I am not able to
appreciate the worth of the discovery. I have often heard
him express a warm regard for his associates in office, and 20
how fortunate he considered himself in having his lot thrown
in amongst them. "There is more sense, more discourse,
more shrewdness, and even talent, among these clerks," he
would say, "than in twice the number of authors by profes-
sion that I have conversed with." He would brighten up 25
sometimes upon the "old days of the India House," when
he consorted with Woodroffe and Wissett, and Peter Corbet
(a descendant and worthy representative, bating the point of
sanctity, of old facetious Bishop Corbet) ; and Hoole, who
translated Tasso ; and Bartlemy Brown, whose father (God 30
assoil him therefor !) modernized Walton ; and sly, warm-
hearted old Jack Cole (King Cole they called him in those
days) and Campe and Fombelle, and a world of choice spirits,
more than I can remember to name, who associated in those

days with Jack Burrell (the *bon-vivant* of the South-Sea House) ; and little Eyton (said to be a fac-simile of Pope, — he was a miniature of a gentleman), that was cashier under him ; and Dan Voight of the Custom-house, that left 5 the famous library.

Well, Elia is gone, — for aught I know, to be re-united with them, — and these poor traces of his pen are all we have to show for it. How little survives of the wordiest authors ! Of all they said or did in their lifetime, a few glittering words 10 only ! His Essays found some favourers, as they appeared separately ; they shuffled their way in the crowd well enough singly ; how they will *read*, now they are brought together, is a question for the publishers, who have thus ventured to draw out into one piece his “weaved-up follies.”]

PHIL-ELIA.

II. THE SOUTH-SEA HOUSE

15 READER, in thy passage from the Bank — where thou hast been receiving thy half-yearly dividends (supposing thou art a lean annuitant like myself) — to the Flower Pot, to secure a place for Dalston, or Shacklewell, or some other thy suburban retreat northerly, — didst thou never observe a melancholy-looking, handsome, brick and stone edifice, to the left — where Threadneedle Street abuts upon Bishopsgate ? I dare-say thou hast often admired its magnificent portals ever gaping wide, and disclosing to view a grave court, with cloisters, and pillars, with few or no traces of goers-in or comers-out — a 20 desolation something like Balclutha's.¹

This was once a house of trade, — a centre of busy interests. The throng of merchants was here — the quick pulse of gain

¹ I passed by the walls of Balclutha, and they were desolate. — OSSIAN.

— and here some forms of business are still kept up, though the soul be long since fled. Here are still to be seen stately porticoes ; imposing staircases ; offices roomy as the state apartments in palaces — deserted, or thinly peopled with a few straggling clerks ; the still more sacred interiors of court and committee-rooms, with venerable faces of beadle, door-keepers — directors seated in form on solemn days (to proclaim a dead dividend), at long worm-eaten tables, that have been mahogany, with tarnished gilt-leather coverings, supporting massy silver inkstands long since dry ; — the oaken wainscots hung with pictures of deceased governors and sub-governors, of Queen Anne, and the two first monarchs of the Brunswick dynasty ; — huge charts, which subsequent discoveries have antiquated ; — dusty maps of Mexico, dim as dreams, — and soundings of the Bay of Panama ! — The long passages hung with buckets, appended, in idle row, to walls, whose substance might defy any, short of the last conflagration : — with vast ranges of cellarage under all, where dollars and pieces of eight once lay, an “unsunned heap,” for Mammon to have solaced his solitary heart withal, — long since dissipated, or scattered into air at the blast of the breaking of that famous BUBBLE. —

. Such is the SOUTH-SEA HOUSE. At least, such it was forty years ago, when I knew it, — a magnificent relic ! What alterations may have been made in it since, I have had no opportunities of verifying. Time, I take for granted, has not freshened it. No wind has resuscitated the face of the sleeping waters. A thicker crust by this time stagnates upon it. The moths, that were then battening upon its obsolete ledgers and day-books, have rested from their depredations, but other light generations have succeeded, making fine fretwork among their single and double entries. Layers of dust have accumulated (a superfoetation of dirt !) upon the old layers, that seldom used to be disturbed, save by some curious finger, now and then, inquisitive to explore the mode of book-keeping in

Queen Anne's reign ; or, with less hallowed curiosity, seeking to unveil some of the mysteries of that tremendous HOAX, whose extent the petty peculators of our day look back upon with the same expression of incredulous admiration, and hopeless ambition of rivalry, as would become the puny face of modern conspiracy contemplating the Titan size of Vaux's superhuman plot.

Peace to the manes of the BUBBLE ! Silence and destitution are upon thy walls, proud house, for a memorial !

10 Situated as thou art, in the very heart of stirring and living commerce,—amid the fret and fever of speculation — with the Bank, and the 'Change, and the India House about thee, in the hey-day of present prosperity, with their important faces, as it were, insulting thee, their *poor neighbour out of business*

15 — to the idle and merely contemplative,— to such as me, old house ! there is a charm in thy quiet : — a cessation — a coolness from business — an indolence almost clostral — which is delightful ! With what reverence have I paced thy great bare rooms and courts at eventide ! They spoke of the past : —

20 the shade of some dead accountant, with visionary pen in ear, would flit by me, stiff as in life. Living accounts and accountants puzzle me. I have no skill in figuring. But thy great dead tomes, which scarce three degenerate clerks of the present day could lift from their enshrining shelves — with their old

25 fantastic flourishes, and decorative rubric interlacings — their sums in triple columniations, set down with formal superfluity of cyphers — with pious sentences at the beginning, without which our religious ancestors never ventured to open a book of business, or bill of lading — the costly vellum covers of

30 some of them almost persuading us that we are got into some *better library*, — are very agreeable and edifying spectacles. I can look upon these defunct dragons with complacency. Thy heavy odd-shaped ivory-handled penknives (our ancestors had everything on a larger scale than we have hearts for) are

as good as anything from Herculaneum. The pounce-boxes of our days have gone retrograde.

The very clerks which I remember in the South-Sea House — I speak of forty years back — had an air very different from those in the public offices that I have had to do with since. 5 They partook of the genius of the place !

They were mostly (for the establishment did not admit of superfluous salaries) bachelors. Generally (for they had not much to do) persons of a curious and speculative turn of mind. Old-fashioned, for a reason mentioned before. 10 Humourists, for they were of all descriptions ; and, not having been brought together in early life (which has a tendency to assimilate the members of corporate bodies to each other), but, for the most part, placed in this house in ripe or middle age, they necessarily carried into it their separate habits and 15 oddities, unqualified, if I may so speak, as into a common stock. Hence they formed a sort of Noah's ark. Odd fishes. A lay-monastery. Domestic retainers in a great house, kept more for show than use. Yet pleasant fellows, full of chat — and not a few among them had arrived at considerable 20 proficiency on the German flute.

The cashier at that time was one Evans, a Cambro-Briton. He had something of the choleric complexion of his countrymen stamped on his visage, but was a worthy sensible man at bottom. He wore his hair, to the last, powdered and frizzed 25 out, in the fashion which I remember to have seen in caricatures of what were termed, in my young days, *Maccaronies*. He was the last of that race of beaux. Melancholy as a gibbon over his counter all the forenoon, I think I see him making up his cash (as they call it) with tremulous fingers, as if he 30 feared every one about him was a defaulter ; in his hypochondry ready to imagine himself one ; haunted, at least, with the idea of the possibility of his becoming one : his tristful visage clearing up a little over his roast neck of veal at

Anderton's at two (where his picture still hangs, taken a little before his death by desire of the master of the coffee-house, which he had frequented for the last five-and-twenty years), but not attaining the meridian of its animation till evening
5 brought on the hour of tea and visiting. The simultaneous sound of his well-known rap at the door with the stroke of the clock announcing six, was a topic of never-failing mirth in the families which this dear old bachelor gladdened with his presence. Then was his *forte*, his glorified hour ! How would
10 he chirp, and expand over a muffin ! How would he dilate into secret history ! His countryman Pennant himself, in particular, could not be more eloquent than he in relation to old and new London — the site of old theatres, churches, streets gone to decay — where Rosamond's Pond stood — the Mul-
15 berry Gardens — and the Conduit in Cheap — with many a pleasant anecdote, derived from paternal tradition, of those grotesque figures which Hogarth has immortalized in his picture of *Noon*, — the worthy descendants of those heroic confessors, who, flying to this country, from the wrath of Louis
20 the Fourteenth and his dragoons, kept alive the flame of pure religion in the sheltering obscurities of Hog Lane, and the vicinity of the Seven Dials !

Deputy, under Evans, was Thomas Tame. He had the air and stoop of a nobleman. You would have taken him for one,
25 had you met him in one of the passages leading to Westminster Hall. By stoop I mean that gentle bending of the body forwards, which, in great men, must be supposed to be the effect of an habitual condescending attention to the applications of their inferiors. While he held you in converse, you
30 felt strained to the height in the colloquy. The conference over, you were at leisure to smile at the comparative insignificance of the pretensions which had just awed you. His intellect was of the shallowest order. It did not reach to a saw or a proverb. His mind was in its original state of white paper.

A sucking babe might have posed him. What was it then? Was he rich? Alas, no! Thomas Tame was very poor. Both he and his wife looked outwardly gentlefolks, when I fear all was not well at all times within. She had a neat meagre person, which it was evident she had not sinned in over-pampering; but in its veins was noble blood. She traced her descent, by some labyrinth of relationship, which I never thoroughly understood,—much less can explain with any heraldic certainty at this time of day,—to the illustrious, but unfortunate house of Derwentwater. This was the secret of Thomas's 10 stoop. This was the thought — the sentiment — the bright solitary star of your lives,—ye mild and happy pair,—which cheered you in the night of intellect, and in the obscurity of your station! This was to you instead of riches, instead of rank, instead of glittering attainments: and it was worth them 15 all together. You insulted none with it; but, while you wore it as a piece of defensive armour only, no insult likewise could reach you through it. *Decus et solamen.*

Of quite another stamp was the then accountant, John Tipp. He neither pretended to high blood, nor in good truth cared 20 one fig about the matter. He "thought an accountant the greatest character in the world, and himself the greatest accountant in it." Yet John was not without his hobby. The fiddle relieved his vacant hours. He sang, certainly, with other notes than to the Orphean lyre. He did, indeed, scream 25 and scrape most abominably. His fine suite of official rooms in Threadneedle Street, which, without anything very substantial appended to them, were enough to enlarge a man's notions of himself that lived in them—(I know not who is the occupier of them now¹)—resounded fortnightly to the 30

¹ [I have since been informed, that the present tenant of them is a Mr. Lamb, a gentleman who is happy in the possession of some choice pictures, and among them a rare portrait of Milton, which I mean to do myself the pleasure of going to see, and at the same time to refresh

notes of a concert of "sweet breasts," as our ancestors would have called them, culled from club-rooms and orchestras—chorus singers—first and second violoncellos—double basses—and clarionets—who ate his cold mutton, and drank his 5 punch, and praised his ear. He sate like Lord Midas among them. But at the desk Tipp was quite another sort of creature. Thence all ideas, that were purely ornamental, were banished. You could not speak of anything romantic without rebuke. Politics were excluded. A newspaper was thought too refined 10 and abstracted. The whole duty of man consisted in writing off dividend warrants. The striking of the annual balance in the company's books (which, perhaps, differed from the balance of last year in the sum of £25, 1s. 6d.) occupied his days and nights for a month previous. Not that Tipp was 15 blind to the deadness of *things* (as they call them in the city) in his beloved house, or did not sigh for a return of the old stirring days when South-Sea hopes were young—(he was indeed equal to the wielding of any the most intricate accounts of the most flourishing company in these or those 20 days):—but to a genuine accountant the difference of proceeds is as nothing. The fractional farthing is as dear to his heart as the thousands which stand before it. He is the true actor, who, whether his part be a prince or a peasant, must act it with like intensity. With Tipp form was everything. 25 His life was formal. His actions seemed ruled with a ruler. His pen was not less erring than his heart. He made the best executor in the world: he was plagued with incessant executorships accordingly, which excited his spleen and soothed his vanity in equal ratios. He would swear (for Tipp swore) at 30 the little orphans, whose rights he would guard with a tenacity

my memory with the sight of old scenes. Mr. Lamb has the character of a right courteous and communicative collector.] This note was omitted in the collected *Essays of Elia* (1823). The Mr. Lamb here mentioned was the author's brother John.—ED.

like the grasp of the dying hand that commended their interests to his protection. With all this there was about him a sort of timidity—(his few enemies used to give it a worse name)—a something which, in reverence to the dead, we will place, if you please, a little on this side of the heroic. 5 Nature certainly had been pleased to endow John Tipp with a sufficient measure of the principle of self-preservation. There is a cowardice which we do not despise, because it has nothing base or treacherous in its elements; it betrays itself, not you: it is mere temperament; the absence of the 10 romantic and the enterprising; it sees a lion in the way, and will not, with Fortinbras, "greatly find quarrel in a straw," when some supposed honour is at stake. Tipp never mounted the box of a stage-coach in his life; or leaned against the rails of a balcony; or walked upon the ridge of a parapet; 15 or looked down a precipice; or let off a gun; or went upon a water-party; or would willingly let you go if he could have helped it: neither was it recorded of him, that for lucre, or for intimidation, he ever forsook friend or principle.

Whom next shall we summon from the dusty dead, in 20 whom common qualities become uncommon? Can I forget thee, Henry Man, the wit, the polished man of letters, the *author*, of the South-Sea House? who never enteredst thy office in a morning, or quittedst it in mid-day—(what didst *thou* in an office?)—without some quirk that left a sting! 25 Thy gibes and thy jokes are now extinct, or survive but in two forgotten volumes, which I had the good fortune to rescue from a stall in Barbican, not three days ago, and found thee terse, fresh, epigrammatic, as alive. Thy wit is a little gone by in these fastidious days—thy topics are staled by the 30 "new-born gauds" of the time:—but great thou used to be in Public Ledgers, and in Chronicles, upon Chatham and Shelburne, and Rockingham, and Howe, and Burgoyne, and Clinton, and the war which ended in the tearing from Great

Britain her rebellious colonies — and Keppel, and Wilkes, and Sawbridge, and Bull, and Dunning, and Pratt, and Richmond, — and such small politics. —

A little less facetious, and a great deal more obstreperous, 5 was fine rattling, rattleheaded Plumer. He was descended — not in a right line, reader (for his lineal pretensions, like his personal, favoured a little of the sinister bend) — from the Plumers of Hertfordshire. So tradition gave him out; and certain family features not a little sanctioned the opinion. 10 Certainly old Walter Plumer (his reputed author) had been a rake in his days, and visited much in Italy, and had seen the world. He was uncle, bachelor-uncle, to the fine old Whig still living, who has represented the county in so many successive parliaments, and has a fine old mansion near Ware. Walter 15 flourished in George the Second's days, and was the same who was summoned before the House of Commons about a business of franks, with the old Duchess of Marlborough. You may read of it in Johnson's *Life of Cave*. Cave came off cleverly in that business. It is certain our Plumer did nothing to discounte- 20 nance the rumour. He rather seemed pleased whenever it was, with all gentleness, insinuated. But, besides his family pretensions, Plumer was an engaging fellow, and sang gloriously. —

Not so sweetly sang Plumer as thou sangest, mild, child-like, pastoral M — ; a flute's breathing less divinely whispering 25 than thy Arcadian melodies, when in tones worthy of Arden, thou didst chant that song sung by Amiens to the banished Duke, which proclaims the winter wind more lenient than for a man to be ungrateful. Thy sire was old surly M — , the unapproachable churchwarden of Bishopsgate. He knew not 30 what he did, when he begat thee, like spring, gentle offspring of blustering winter : — only unfortunate in thy ending, which should have been mild, conciliatory, swan-like. —

Much remains to sing. Many fantastic shapes rise up, but they must be mine in private : — already I have fooled the

reader to the top of his bent ; — else could I omit that strange creature Woollett, who existed in trying the question, and *bought litigations* ? — and still stranger, inimitable solemn Hepworth, from whose gravity Newton might have deduced the law of gravitation. How profoundly would he nib a pen — 5 with what deliberation would he wet a wafer ! —

But it is time to close — night's wheels are rattling fast over me — it is proper to have done with this solemn mockery.

Reader, what if I have been playing with thee all this while — peradventure the very *names*, which I have summoned up 10 before thee, are fantastic, insubstantial — like Henry Pimpernel, and old John Naps of Greece : —

Be satisfied that something answering to them has had a being. Their importance is from the past.

III. OXFORD IN THE VACATION

CASTING a preparatory glance at the bottom of this article, as 15 the wary connoisseur in prints, with cursory eye (which, while it reads, seems as though it read not), never fails to consult the *quis sculpsit* in the corner, before he pronounces some rare piece to be a Vivares, or a Woollett — methinks I hear you exclaim, reader, *Who is Elia ?* 20

Because in my last I tried to divert thee with some half-forgotten humours of some old clerks defunct, in an old house of business, long since gone to decay, doubtless you have already set me down in your mind as one of the self-same college — a votary of the desk — a notched and cropt scrivener 25 — one that sucks his sustenance, as certain sick people are said to do, through a quill.

Well, I do agnize something of the sort. I confess that it is my humour, my fancy — in the forepart of the day, when the mind of your man of letters requires some relaxation — (and 30

none better than such as at first sight seems most abhorrent from his beloved studies) — to while away some good hours of my time in the contemplation of indigos, cottons, raw silks, piece-goods, flowered or otherwise. In the first place . . . and 5 then it sends you home with such increased appetite to your books . . . not to say, that your outside sheets, and waste wrappers of foolscap, do receive into them, most kindly and naturally, the impression of sonnets, epigrams, *essays* — so that the very parings of a counting-house are, in some sort, the 10 settings up of an author. The enfranchised quill, that has plodded all the morning among the cart-rucks of figures and cyphers, frisks and curvets so at its ease over the flowery carpet-ground of a midnight dissertation. It feels its promotion. . . . So that you see, upon the whole, the literary dignity of 15 *Elia* is very little, if at all, compromised in the condescension.

Not that, in my anxious detail of the many commodities incidental to the life of a public office, I would be thought blind to certain flaws, which a cunning carper might be able to pick in this Joseph's vest. And here I must have leave, in the 20 fulness of my soul, to regret the abolition, and doing-away with altogether, of those consolatory interstices, and sprinklings of freedom, through the four seasons, — the *red-letter days*, now become, to all intents and purposes, *dead-letter days*. There was Paul, and Stephen, and Barnabas —

25 Andrew and John, men famous in old times ;

— we were used to keep all their days holy, as long back as I was at school at Christ's. I remember their effigies, by the same token, in the old *Basket* Prayer-book. There hung Peter in his uneasy posture — holy Bartlemy in the troublesome act 30 of flaying, after the famous Marsyas by Spagnoletti. — I honoured them all, and could almost have wept the defalcation of Iscariot — so much did we love to keep holy memories sacred : — only methought I a little grudged at the coalition of the

better Jude with Simon — clubbing (as it were) their sanctities together, to make up one poor gaudy-day between them — as an economy unworthy of the dispensation.

These were bright visitations in a scholar's and a clerk's life — “far off their coming shone.” — I was as good as an almanac in those days. I could have told you such a saint's-day falls out next week, or the week after. Peradventure the Epiphany, by some periodical infelicity, would, once in six years, merge in a Sabbath. Now am I little better than one of the profane. Let me not be thought to arraign the wisdom 10 of my civil superiors, who have judged the further observation of these holy tides to be papistical, superstitious. Only in a custom of such long standing, methinks, if their Holinesses the Bishops had, in decency, been first sounded — but I am wading out of my depths. I am not the man to decide the limits 15 of civil and ecclesiastical authority — I am plain Elia — no Selden, nor Archbishop Usher — though at present in the thick of their books, here in the heart of learning, under the shadow of the mighty Bodley.

I can here play the gentleman, enact the student. To such 20 a one as myself, who has been defrauded in his young years of the sweet food of academic institution, nowhere is so pleasant, to while away a few idle weeks at, as one or other of the Universities. Their vacation, too, at this time of the year, falls in so pat with *ours*. Here I can take my walks unmo- 25 lested, and fancy myself of what degree or standing I please. I seem admitted *ad eundem*. I fetch up past opportunities. I can rise at the chapel-bell, and dream that it rings for *me*. In moods of humility I can be a Sizar, or a Servitor. When the peacock vein rises, I strut a Gentleman Commoner. In 30 graver moments, I proceed Master of Arts. Indeed I do not think I am much unlike that respectable character. I have seen your dim-eyed vergers, and bed-makers in spectacles, drop a bow or curtsey, as I pass, wisely mistaking me for

something of the sort. I go about in black, which favours the notion. Only in Christ Church reverend quadrangle, I can be content to pass for nothing short of a Seraphic Doctor.

The walks at these times are so much one's own, — the tall 5 trees of Christ's, the groves of Magdalen ! The halls deserted, and with open doors, inviting one to slip in unperceived, and pay a devoir to some Founder, or noble or royal Benefactress (that should have been ours) whose portrait seems to smile upon their over-looked beadsman, and to adopt me for their 10 own. Then, to take a peep in by the way at the butteries, and sculleries, redolent of antique hospitality : the immense caves 15 of kitchens, kitchen fireplaces, cordial recesses ; ovens whose first pies were baked four centuries ago ; and spits which have cooked for Chaucer ! Not the meanest minister among the dishes but is hallowed to me through his imagination, and the Cook goes forth a Manciple.

Antiquity ! thou wondrous charm, what art thou? that, being nothing, art everything ! When thou *wert*, thou wert not antiquity — then thou wert nothing, but hadst a remoter *antiquity*, 20 as thou calledst it, to look back to with blind veneration ; thou thyself being to thyself flat, jejune, *modern* ! What mystery lurks in this retroversion? or what half Januses¹ are we, that cannot look forward with the same idolatry with which we for ever revert ! The mighty future is as nothing, being every- 25 thing ! the past is everything, being nothing !

What were thy *dark ages*? Surely the sun rose as brightly then as now, and man got him to his work in the morning. Why is it that we can never hear mention of them without an accompanying feeling, as though a palpable obscure had dimmed the face 30 of things, and that our ancestors wandered to and fro groping !

Above all thy rarities, old Oxenford, what do most arride and solace me, are thy repositories of mouldering learning, thy shelves —

¹ Januses of one face. — SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

What a place to be in is an old library! It seems as though all the souls of all the writers, that have bequeathed their labours to these Bodleians, were reposing here, as in some dormitory, or middle state. I do not want to handle, to profane the leaves, their winding-sheets. I could as soon 5 dislodge a shade. I seem to inhale learning, walking amid their foliage; and the odour of their old moth-scented coverings is fragrant as the first bloom of those scintial apples which grew amid the happy orchard.

Still less have I curiosity to disturb the elder repose of MSS.¹ 10 Those *variae lectiones*, so tempting to the more erudite palates, do but disturb and unsettle my faith. I am no Herculanean raker. The credit of the three witnesses might have slept unimpeached for me. I leave these curiosities to Porson, and to G. D.—whom, by the way, I found busy as a moth over some 15 rotten archive, rummaged out of some seldom-explored press, in a nook at Oriel. With long poring, he is grown almost into a book. He stood as passive as one by the side of the old shelves. I longed to new-coat him in Russia, and assign him his place. He might have mustered for a tall Scapula. 20

¹ [There is something to me repugnant at any time in written hand. The text never seems determinate. Print settles it. I had thought of the Lycidas as of a full-grown beauty—as springing up with all its parts absolute—till, in an evil hour, I was shown the original copy of it, together with the other minor poems of its author, in the library of Trinity, kept like some treasure, to be proud of. I wish they had thrown them in the Cam, or sent them after the latter cantos of Spenser, into the Irish Channel. How it staggered me to see the fine things in their ore! interlined, corrected! as if their words were mortal, alterable, displaceable at pleasure! as if they might have been otherwise, just as good! as if inspiration were made up of parts, and these fluctuating, successive, indifferent! I will never go into the workshop of any great artist again, nor desire a sight of his picture till it is fairly off the easel; no, not if Raphael were to be alive again, and painting another Galatea.] This note appeared in the *London* but was omitted by Lamb in the edition of 1823.—ED.

D. is assiduous in his visits to these seats of learning. No inconsiderable portion of his moderate fortune, I apprehend, is consumed in journeys between them and Clifford's Inn — where, like a dove on the asp's nest, he has long taken up his 5 unconscious abode, amid an incongruous assembly of attorneys' clerks, apparitors, promoters, vermin of the law, among whom he sits, "in calm and sinless peace." The fangs of the law pierce him not — the winds of litigation blow over his humble chambers — the hard sheriff's officer moves his hat as he passes 10 — legal or illegal courtesy touches him — none thinks of offering violence or injustice to him¹ — you would as soon "strike an abstract idea."

D. has been engaged, he tells me, through a course of laborious years, in an investigation into all curious matter connected 15 with the two Universities ; and has lately lit upon a MS. collection of charters, relative to C——, by which he hopes to settle some disputed points — particularly that long controversy between them as to priority of foundation. The ardour with which he engages in these liberal pursuits, I am afraid, has 20 not met with all the encouragement it deserved, either here, or at C——. Your caputs, and heads of Colleges, care less than anybody else about these questions. — Contented to suck the milky fountains of their Alma Maters, without inquiring into the venerable gentlewomen's years, they rather hold such

¹ [Violence or injustice certainly none, Mr. Elia. But you will acknowledge that the charming unsuspectingness of our friend has sometimes laid him open to attacks, which, though savouring (we hope) more of wagery than of malice — such is our unfeigned respect for G. D. — might, we think, much better have been omitted. Such was that silly joke of L——, who, at the time the question of the Scotch novels was first agitated, gravely assured our friend — who as gravely went about repeating it in all companies — that Lord Castle-reagh had acknowledged himself to be the author of *Waverley!* — Note, not by Elia.] This note, appended to the original essay, was a hoax, L—— being Lamb himself. — ED.

curiosities to be impertinent — unreverend. They have their good glebe lands *in manu*, and care not much to rake into the title-deeds. I gather at least so much from other sources, for D. is not a man to complain.

D. started like an unbroke heifer, when I interrupted him. 5 *A priori* it was not very probable that we should have met in Oriel. But D. would have done the same, had I accosted him on the sudden in his own walks in Clifford's Inn, or in the Temple. In addition to a provoking shortsightedness (the effect of late studies and watchings at the midnight oil), D. is 10 the most absent of men. He made a call the other morning at our friend *M.*'s in Bedford Square; and finding nobody at home, was ushered into the hall, where asking for pen and ink, with great exactitude of purpose he enters me his name in the book — which ordinarily lies about in such places, to record 15 the failures of the untimely or unfortunate visitor — and takes his leave with many ceremonies, and professions of regret. Some two or three hours after, his walking destinies returned him into the same neighbourhood again, and again the quiet image of the fireside circle at *M.*'s — Mrs. *M.* presiding at 20 it like a Queen Lar, with pretty *A. S.* at her side — striking irresistibly on his fancy, he makes another call (forgetting that they were "certainly not to return from the country before that day week") and disappointed a second time, inquires for pen and paper as before: again the book is brought, and in 25 the line just above that in which he is about to print his second name (his re-script) — his first name (scarce dry) looks out upon him like another Sosia, or as if a man should suddenly encounter his own duplicate! The effect may be conceived. D. made many a good resolution against any such lapses in 30 future. I hope he will not keep them too rigorously.

For with G. D. — to be absent from the body, is sometimes (not to speak it profanely) to be present with the Lord. At the very time when, personally encountering thee, he passes

on with no recognition — or, being stopped, starts like a thing surprised — at that moment, reader, he is on Mount Tabor — or Parnassus — or co-sphered with Plato — or, with Harrington, framing “immortal commonwealths” — devising some plan of 5 amelioration to thy country, or thy species — peradventure meditating some individual kindness or courtesy, to be done to *thee thyself*, the returning consciousness of which made him to start so guiltily at thy obtruded personal presence.

[D. commenced life after a course of hard study in the 10 house of “pure Emanuel,” as usher to a knavish fanatic school-master at —, at a salary of eight pounds per annum, with board and lodging. Of this poor stipend he never received above half in all the laborious years he served this man. He tells a pleasant anecdote, that when poverty, staring out at 15 his ragged knees, has sometimes compelled him, against the modesty of his nature, to hint at arrears, Dr. — would take no immediate notice, but after supper, when the school was called together to even-song, he would never fail to introduce some instructive homily against riches, and the corruption of 20 the heart occasioned through the desire of them — ending with “Lord, keep thy servants, above all things, from the heinous sin of avarice. Having food and raiment, let us therewithal be content. Give me Agur’s wish” — and the like — which, to the little auditory, sounded like a doctrine 25 full of Christian prudence and simplicity, but to poor D. was a receipt in full for that quarter’s demand at least.

And D. has been under-working for himself ever since ; — drudging at low rates for unappreciating booksellers, — wasting his fine erudition in silent corrections of the classics, and in 30 those unostentatious but solid services to learning which commonly fall to the lot of laborious scholars, who have not the heart to sell themselves to the best advantage. He has published poems, which do not sell, because their character is unobtrusive, like his own, and because he has been too much

absorbed in ancient literature to know what the popular mark in poetry is, even if he could have hit it. And, therefore, his verses are properly, what he terms them, *crotchets*; voluntaries; odes to liberty and spring; effusions; little tributes and offerings, left behind him upon tables and window-seats 5 at parting from friends' houses; and from all the inns of hospitality, where he has been courteously (or but tolerably) received in his pilgrimage. If his muse of kindness halt a little behind the strong lines in fashion in this excitement-loving age, his prose is the best of the sort in the world, and 10 exhibits a faithful transcript of his own healthy, natural mind, and cheerful, innocent tone of conversation.]

D. is delightful anywhere, but he is at the best in such places as these. He cares not much for Bath. He is out of his element at Buxton, at Scarborough, or Harrogate. The 15 Cam and the Isis are to him "better than all the waters of Damascus." On the Muses' hill he is happy, and good, as one of the Shepherds on the Delectable Mountains; and when he goes about with you to show you the halls and colleges, you think you have with you the Interpreter of the House 20 Beautiful.

IV. CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE-AND-THIRTY YEARS AGO

IN Mr. Lamb's "Works," published a year or two since, I find a magnificent eulogy on my old school,¹ such as it was, or now appears to him to have been between the years 1782 and 1789. It happens, very oddly, that my own standing 25 at Christ's was nearly corresponding with his; and, with all gratitude to him for his enthusiasm for the cloisters, I think he has contrived to bring together whatever can be said in

¹ "Recollections of Christ's Hospital."

praise of them, dropping all the other side of the argument most ingeniously.

I remember L. at school ; and can well recollect that he had some peculiar advantages, which I and others of his school-
5 fellows had not. His friends lived in town, and were near at hand ; and he had the privilege of going to see them, almost as often as he wished, through some invidious distinction, which was denied to us. The present worthy sub-treasurer to the
10 Inner Temple can explain how that happened. He had his tea and hot rolls in the morning, while we were battening upon our quarter of a penny loaf—our *crug*—moistened with attenuated small beer, in wooden piggins, smacking of the pitched leathern jack it was poured from. Our Monday's milk porritch, blue and tasteless, and the pease soup of Saturday, coarse and
15 choking, were enriched for him with a slice of "extraordinary bread and butter," from the hot-loaf of the Temple. The Wednesday's mess of millet, somewhat less repugnant — (we had three banyan to four meat days in the week) — was endeared to his palate with a lump of double-refined, and a
20 smack of ginger (to make it go down the more glibly) or the fragrant cinnamon. In lieu of our *half-pickled* Sundays, or *quite fresh* boiled beef on Thursdays (strong as *caro equina*), with detestable marigolds floating in the pail to poison the broth — our scanty mutton crags on Fridays — and rather
25 more savoury, but grudging, portions of the same flesh, rotten-roasted or rare, on the Tuesdays (the only dish which excited our appetites, and disappointed our stomachs, in almost equal proportion) — he had his hot plate of roast veal, or the more tempting griskin (exotics unknown to our palates), cooked in
30 the paternal kitchen (a great thing), and brought him daily by his maid or aunt ! I remember the good old relative (in whom love forbade pride) squatting down upon some odd stone in a by-nook of the cloisters, disclosing the viands (of higher regale than those cates which the ravens ministered to the

Tishbite) ; and the contending passions of L. at the unfolding. There was love for the bringer ; shame for the thing brought, and the manner of its bringing ; sympathy for those who were too many to share in it ; and, at top of all, hunger (eldest, strongest of the passions !) predominant, breaking 5 down the stony fences of shame, and awkwardness, and a troubling over-consciousness.

I was a poor friendless boy. My parents, and those who should care for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs, which they could reckon upon being kind to me in 10 the great city, after a little forced notice, which they had the grace to take of me on my first arrival in town, soon grew tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough ; and, one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six 15 hundred playmates.

O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early home-
stead ! The yearnings which I used to have towards it in those
unfledged years ! How, in my dreams, would my native town
(far in the west) come back, with its church, and trees, and 20
faces ! How I would wake weeping, and in the anguish of
my heart exclaim upon sweet Calne in Wiltshire !

To this late hour of my life, I trace impressions left by the
recollection of those friendless holidays. The long warm days
of summer never return but they bring with them a gloom from 25
the haunting memory of those *whole-day-leaves*, when, by some
strange arrangement, we were turned out, for the livelong day,
upon our own hands, whether we had friends to go to, or none.
I remember those bathing-excursions to the New-River, which
L. recalls with such relish, better, I think, than he can — for 30
he was a home-seeking lad, and did not much care for such
water-pastimes : — How merrily we would sally forth into the
fields ; and strip under the first warmth of the sun ; and wanton
like young dace in the streams ; getting us appetites for noon,

which those of us that were penniless (our scanty morning crust long since exhausted) had not the means of allaying — while the cattle, and the birds, and the fishes, were at feed about us, and we had nothing to satisfy our cravings — the 5 very beauty of the day, and the exercise of the pastime, and the sense of liberty, setting a keener edge upon them ! — How faint and languid, finally, we would return, towards night-fall, to our desired morsel, half-rejoicing, half-reluctant, that the hours of our uneasy liberty had expired !

10 It was worse in the days of winter, to go prowling about the streets objectless — shivering at cold windows of print-shops, to extract a little amusement ; or haply, as a last resort, in the hope of a little novelty, to pay a fifty-times repeated visit (where our individual faces should be as well known to 15 the warden as those of his own charges) to the Lions in the Tower — to whose levée, by courtesy immemorial, we had a prescriptive title to admission.

L.'s governor (so we called the patron who presented us to the foundation) lived in a manner under his paternal roof. Any 20 complaint which he had to make was sure of being attended to. This was understood at Christ's, and was an effectual screen to him against the severity of masters, or worse tyranny of the monitors. The oppressions of these young brutes are heart-sickening to call to recollection. I have been called out of 25 my bed, and *waked for the purpose*, in the coldest winter nights — and this not once, but night after night — in my shirt, to receive the discipline of a leathern thong, with eleven other sufferers, because it pleased my callow overseer, when there has been any talking heard after we were gone to bed, 30 to make the six last beds in the dormitory, where the youngest children of us slept, answerable for an offence they neither dared to commit, nor had the power to hinder. The same execrable tyranny drove the younger part of us from the fires, when our feet were perishing with snow ; and, under the cruelest

penalties, forbade the indulgence of a drink of water, when we lay in sleepless summer nights, fevered with the season, and the day's sports.

There was one H——, who, I learned, in after-days, was seen expiating some maturer offence in the hulks. (Do I 5 flatter myself in fancying that this might be the planter of that name, who suffered — at Nevis, I think, or St. Kits, — some few years since? My friend Tobin was the benevolent instrument of bringing him to the gallows.) This petty Nero actually branded a boy, who had offended him, with a red-hot 10 iron; and nearly starved forty of us, with exacting contributions, to the one half of our bread, to pamper a young ass, which, incredible as it may seem, with the connivance of the nurse's daughter (a young flame of his) he had contrived to smuggle in, and keep upon the leads of the *ward*, as they 15 called our dormitories. This game went on for better than a week, till the foolish beast, not able to fare well but he must cry roast meat — happier than Caligula's minion, could he have kept his own counsel — but, foolisher, alas! than any of his species in the fables — waxing fat, and kicking, in the ful- 20 ness of bread, one unlucky minute would needs proclaim his good fortune to the world below; and, laying out his simple throat, blew such a ram's horn blast, as (toppling down the walls of his own Jericho) set concealment any longer at defiance. The client was dismissed, with certain attentions, to 25 Smithfield; but I never understood that the patron underwent any censure on the occasion. This was in the stewardship of L.'s admired Perry.

Under the same *facile* administration, can L. have forgotten the cool impunity with which the nurses used to carry away 30 openly, in open platters, for their own tables, one out of two of every hot joint, which the careful matron had been seeing scrupulously weighed out for our dinners? These things were daily practised in that magnificent apartment, which I. (grown

connoisseur since, we presume) praises so highly for the grand paintings "by Verrio, and others," with which it is "hung round and adorned." But the sight of sleek well-fed blue-coat boys in pictures was, at that time, I believe, little consolatory to 5 him, or us, the living ones, who saw the better part of our provisions carried away before our faces by harpies ; and ourselves reduced (with the Trojan in the hall of Dido)

To feed our mind with idle portraiture.

L. has recorded the repugnance of the school to *gags*, or the 10 fat of fresh beef boiled ; and sets it down to some superstition. But these unctuous morsels are never grateful to young palates (children are universally fat-haters), and in strong, coarse, boiled meats, *unsalted*, are detestable. A *gag-eater* in our time was equivalent to a *ghoul*, and held in equal detestation. 15 —— suffered under the imputation :

————— 'Twas said,
He ate strange flesh.

He was observed, after dinner, carefully to gather up the remnants left at his table (not many, nor very choice fragments, 20 you may credit me) — and, in an especial manner, these disreputable morsels, which he would convey away, and secretly stow in the settle that stood at his bed-side: None saw when he ate them. It was rumoured that he privately devoured them in the night. He was watched, but no traces of such 25 midnight practices were discoverable. Some reported, that, on leave-days, he had been seen to carry out of the bounds a large blue check handkerchief, full of something. This then must be the accursed thing. Conjecture next was at work to imagine how he could dispose of it. Some said he sold it to 30 the beggars. This belief generally prevailed. He went about moping. None spake to him. No one would play with him. He was excommunicated ; put out of the pale of the school.

He was too powerful a boy to be beaten, but he underwent every mode of that negative punishment, which is more grievous than many stripes. Still he persevered. At length he was observed by two of his school-fellows, who were determined to get at the secret, and had traced him one leave-day for that purpose, to enter a large worn-out building, such as there exist specimens of in Chancery Lane, which are let out to various scales of pauperism with open door, and a common staircase. After him they silently slunk in, and followed by stealth up four flights, and saw him tap at a poor wicket, which was opened 5 by an aged woman, meanly clad. Suspicion was now ripened into certainty. The informers had secured their victim. They had him in their toils. Accusation was formally preferred, and retribution most signal was looked for. Mr. Hathaway, the then steward, for this happened a little after my time, with 10 that patient sagacity which tempered all his conduct, determined to investigate the matter, before he proceeded to sentence. The result was, that the supposed mendicants, the receivers or purchasers of the mysterious scraps, turned out to be the parents of —, an honest couple come to decay, — 15 whom this seasonable supply had, in all probability, saved from mendicancy; and that this young stork, at the expense of his own good name, had all this while been only feeding the old birds! The governors on this occasion, much to their honour, voted a present relief to the family of —, and presented 20 him with a silver medal. The lesson which the steward read upon RASH JUDGMENT, on the occasion of publicly delivering the medal to —, I believe, would not be lost upon his auditory. I had left school then, but I well remember —. He was a tall, shambling youth, with a cast in his eye, 25 not at all calculated to conciliate hostile prejudices. I have since seen him carrying a baker's basket. I think I heard he did not do quite so well by himself, as he had done by the old folks.

I was a hypochondriac lad ; and a sight of a boy in fetters, upon the day of my first putting on the blue clothes, was not exactly fitted to assuage the natural terrors of initiation. I was of tender years, barely turned of seven ; and had only read 5 of such things in books, or seen them but in dreams. I was told he had *run away*. This was the punishment for the first offence. As a novice I was soon after taken to see the dungeons. These were little, square, Bedlam cells, where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket — a mat-
10 tress, I think, was afterwards substituted — with a peep of light, let in askance, from a prison-orifice at top, barely enough to read by. Here the poor boy was locked in by himself all day, without sight of any but the porter who brought him his bread and water — who *might not speak to him* ; or of the
15 beadle, who came twice a week to call him out to receive his periodical chastisement, which was almost welcome, because it separated him for a brief interval from solitude : — and here he was shut up by himself of *nights*, out of the reach of any sound, to suffer whatever horrors the weak nerves, and super-
20 stition incident to his time of life, might subject him to.¹ This was the penalty for the second offence. Wouldst thou like, reader, to see what became of him in the next degree ?

The culprit, who had been a third time an offender, and whose expulsion was at this time deemed irreversible, was 25 brought forth, as at some solemn *auto da fé*, arrayed in uncouth and most appalling attire — all trace of his late “watchet weeds” carefully effaced, he was exposed in a jacket, resembling those which London lamplighters formerly delighted in,

¹ One or two instances of lunacy, or attempted suicide, accordingly, at length convinced the governors of the impolicy of this part of the sentence, and the midnight torture to the spirits was dispensed with. This fancy of dungeons for children was a sprout of Howard's brain, for which (saving the reverence due to Holy Paul), methinks, I could willingly spit upon his statue.

with a cap of the same. The effect of this divestiture was such as the ingenious devisers of it could have anticipated. With his pale and frightened features, it was as if some of those disfigurements in Dante had seized upon him. In this dis-
guise-
ment he was brought into the hall (*L.'s favourite state-
room*) where awaited him the whole number of his school-
fellow-
5
fellows, whose joint lessons and sports he was thenceforth to share no more ; the awful presence of the steward, to be seen for the last time ; of the executioner beadle, clad in his state robe for the occasion ; and of two faces more, of direr import, 10
because never but in these extremities visible. These were governors ; two of whom, by choice, or charter, were always accustomed to officiate at these *Ultima Supplicia* ; not to mitigate (so at least we understood it), but to enforce the utter-
most stripe. Old Bamber Gascoigne, and Peter Aubert, 15
remember, were colleagues on one occasion, when the beadle turning rather pale, a glass of brandy was ordered to prepare him for the mysteries. The scourging was, after the old Roman fashion, long and stately. The lictor accompanied the criminal quite round the hall. We were generally too faint with attend-
ing to the previous disgusting circumstances to make accurate report with our eyes of the degree of corporal suffering inflicted. Report, of course, gave out the back knotty and livid. After scourging, he was made over, in his *San Benito*, to his friends, 20
if he had any (but commonly such poor runagates were friend-
less), or to his parish officer, who, to enhance the effect of 25
the scene, had his station allotted to him on the outside of the hall gate.

These solemn pageantries were not played off so often as to spoil the general mirth of the community. We had plenty 30
of exercise and recreation *after* school hours ; and, for myself, I must confess, that I was never happier, than *in* them. The Upper and the Lower Grammar Schools were held in the same room ; and an imaginary line only divided their bounds.

Their character was as different as that of the inhabitants on the two sides of the Pyrenees. The Rev. James Boyer was the Upper Master ; but the Rev. Matthew Field presided over that portion of the apartment of which I had the good fortune 5 to be a member. We lived a life as careless as birds. We talked and did just what we pleased, and nobody molested us. We carried an accidence, or a grammar, for form ; but, for any trouble it gave us, we might take two years in getting through the verbs deponent, and another two in forgetting all that we 10 had learned about them. There was now and then the formality of saying a lesson, but if you had not learned it, a brush across the shoulders (just enough to disturb a fly) was the sole remonstrance. Field never used the rod ; and in truth he wielded the cane with no great good-will — holding it “like a 15 dancer.” It looked in his hands rather like an emblem, than an instrument of authority ; and an emblem, too, he was ashamed of. He was a good, easy man, that did not care to ruffle his own peace, nor perhaps set any great consideration upon the value of juvenile time. He came among us, now and then, but 20 often stayed away whole days from us ; and when he came, it made no difference to us — he had his private room to retire to, the short time he stayed, to be out of the sound of our noise. Our mirth and uproar went on. We had classics of our own, without being beholden to “insolent Greece or haughty Rome,” 25 that passed current among us — Peter Wilkins — the Adventures of the Hon. Capt. Robert Boyle — the Fortunate Blue Coat Boy — and the like. Or we cultivated a turn for mechanic or scientific operations ; making little sun-dials of paper ; or weaving those ingenious parentheses, called *cat-cradles* ; or making dry peas to dance upon the end of a tin pipe ; or studying the 30 art military over that laudable game “French and English,” and a hundred other such devices to pass away the time — mixing the useful with the agreeable — as would have made the souls of Rousseau and John Locke chuckle to have seen us.

Matthew Field belonged to that class of modest divines who affect to mix in equal proportion the *gentleman*, the *scholar*, and the *Christian*; but, I know not how, the first ingredient is generally found to be the predominating dose in the composition. He was engaged in gay parties, or with his courtly 5 bow at some episcopal *levée*, when he should have been attending upon us. He had for many years the classical charge of a hundred children, during the four or five first years of their education; and his very highest form seldom proceeded further than two or three of the introductory fables of Phædrus. How 10 things were suffered to go on thus, I cannot guess. Boyer, who was the proper person to have remedied these abuses, always affected, perhaps felt, a delicacy in interfering in a province not strictly his own. I have not been without my suspicions, that he was not altogether displeased at the contrast we 15 presented to his end of the school. We were a sort of Helots to his young Spartans. He would sometimes, with ironic deference, send to borrow a rod of the Under Master, and then, with sardonic grin, observe to one of his upper boys, "how neat and fresh the twigs looked." While his pale students were battering 20 their brains over Xenophon and Plato, with a silence as deep as that enjoined by the Samite, we were enjoying ourselves at our ease in our little Goshen. We saw a little into the secrets of his discipline, and the prospect did but the more reconcile us to our lot. His thunders rolled innocuous for us; his storms came 25 near, but never touched us; contrary to Gideon's miracle, while all around were drenched, our fleece was dry.¹ His boys turned out the better scholars; we, I suspect, have the advantage in temper. His pupils cannot speak of him without something of terror allaying their gratitude; the remembrance of Field 30 comes back with all the soothing images of indolence, and summer slumbers, and work like play, and innocent idleness, and Elysian exemptions, and life itself a "playing holiday."

¹ Cowley.

Though sufficiently removed from the jurisdiction of Boyer, we were near enough (as I have said) to understand a little of his system. We occasionally heard sounds of the *Ululantes*, and caught glances of Tartarus. B. was a rabid pedant. His English style was cramped to barbarism. His Easter anthems (for his duty obliged him to those periodical flights) were grating as scannel pipes.¹ He would laugh, ay, and heartily, but then it must be at Flaccus's quibble about *Rex* — or at the *tristis severitas in vultu*, or *inspicere in patinas*, of Terence — thin jests, which at their first broaching could hardly have had *vis* enough to move a Roman muscle. He had two wigs, both pedantic, but of different omen. The one serene, smiling, fresh powdered, betokening a mild day. The other, an old discoloured, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. Woe to the school, when he made his morning appearance in his *passy*, or *passionate wig*. No comet expounded surer. J. B. had a heavy hand. I have known him double his knotty fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips) with a “Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me?” Nothing was more common than to see him make a headlong entry into the school-room, from his inner recess, or library, and, with turbulent eye, singling out a lad, roar out, “Od 's my life, sirrah” (his favourite adjuration), “I have a great mind to whip you,” — then, with as sudden a retracting impulse, fling back into his lair — and after a cooling lapse of some minutes (during which all but the culprit had totally forgotten the context) drive headlong out

¹ In this and everything B. was the antipodes of his coadjutor. While the former was digging his brains for crude anthems, worth a pig-nut, F. would be recreating his gentlemanly fancy in the more flowery walks of the Muses. A little dramatic effusion of his, under the name of Vertumnus and Pomona, is not yet forgotten by the chroniclers of that sort of literature. It was accepted by Garrick, but the town did not give it their sanction. B. used to say of it, in a way of half-compliment, half-irony, that it was *too classical for representation*.

again, piecing out his imperfect sense, as if it had been some Devil's Litany, with the expletory yell — “*and I will, too.*” In his gentler moods, when the *rabidus furor* was assuaged, he had resort to an ingenious method, peculiar, for what I have heard, to himself, of whipping the boy, and reading the Debates, 5 at the same time ; a paragraph, and a lash between ; which in those times, when parliamentary oratory was most at a height and flourishing in these realms, was not calculated to impress the patient with a veneration for the diffuser graces of rhetoric.

Once, and but once, the uplifted rod was known to fall 10 ineffectual from his hand — when droll squinting W——, having been caught putting the inside of the master's desk to a use for which the architect had clearly not designed it, to justify himself, with great simplicity averred, that *he did not know that the thing had been forewarned.* This exquisite 15 irrecognition of any law antecedent to the *oral* or *declaratory*, struck so irresistibly upon the fancy of all who heard it (the pedagogue himself not excepted) that remission was unavoidable.

L. has given credit to B.'s great merits as an instructor. 20 Coleridge, in his Literary Life, has pronounced a more intelligible and ample encomium on them. The author of the Country Spectator doubts not to compare him with the ablest teachers of antiquity. Perhaps we cannot dismiss him better than with the pious ejaculation of C—— when he heard that 25 his old master was on his death-bed — “ Poor J. B. — may all his faults be forgiven ; and may he be wafted to bliss by little cherub boys, all head and wings, with no *bottoms* to reproach his sublunary infirmities.”

Under him were many good and sound scholars bred. First 30 Grecian of my time was Lancelot Pepys Stevens, kindest of boys and men, since Co-grammar-master (and inseparable companion) with Dr. T——e. What an edifying spectacle did this brace of friends present to those who remembered the

antisocialities of their predecessors ! You never met the one by chance in the street without a wonder, which was quickly dissipated by the almost immediate sub-appearance of the other. Generally arm in arm, these kindly coadjutors lightened for 5 each other the toilsome duties of their profession, and when, in advanced age, one found it convenient to retire, the other was not long in discovering that it suited him to lay down the fasces also. Oh, it is pleasant, as it is rare, to find the same arm linked in yours at forty, which at thirteen helped it to 10 turn over the *Cicero De Amicitia*, or some tale of Antique Friendship, which the young heart even then was burning to anticipate ! Co-Grecian with S. was Th——, who has since executed with ability various diplomatic functions at the Northern courts. Th—— was a tall, dark, saturnine youth, sparing 15 of speech, with raven locks. Thomas Fanshaw Middleton followed him (now Bishop of Calcutta), a scholar and a gentleman in his teens. He has the reputation of an excellent critic ; and is author (besides the *Country Spectator*) of a Treatise on the Greek Article, against Sharpe. M. is said to 20 bear his mitre high in India, where the *regni novitas* (I dare say) sufficiently justifies the bearing. A humility quite as primitive as that of Jewel or Hooker might not be exactly fitted to impress the minds of those Anglo-Asiatic diocesans with a reverence for home institutions, and the church which those fathers 25 watered. The manners of M. at school, though firm, were mild and unassuming. Next to M. (if not senior to him) was Richards, author of the *Aboriginal Britons*, the most spirited of the Oxford Prize Poems ; a pale, studious Grecian. Then followed poor S——, ill-fated M—— ! of these the Muse is silent.

— the dark pillar not yet turned — Samuel Taylor Coleridge — Logician, Metaphysician, Bard ! — How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the *speech* and the *garb* of the young *Mirandula*), to hear thee 5 unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity-boy*! — Many 10 were the “wit-combats” (to dally awhile with the words of old Fuller) between him and C. V. Le G——, “which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon, and an English man-of-war; Master Coleridge, like the former, was built far higher in learning, solid, but slow in his performances. C. V. L., with 15 the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention.”

Nor shalt thou, their compeer, be quickly forgotten, Allen, with the cordial smile, and still more cordial laugh, with which 20 thou wert wont to make the old Cloisters shake, in thy cognition of some poignant jest of theirs; or the anticipation of some more material, and, peradventure, practical one, of thine own. Extinct are those smiles, with that beautiful countenance, with which (for thou wert the *Nireus formosus* of the 25 school), in the days of thy maturer waggery, thou didst disarm the wrath of infuriated town-damsel, who, incensed by provoking pinch, turning tigress-like round, suddenly converted by thy angel-look, exchanged the half-formed terrible “*bl*——,” for a gentler greeting — “*bless thy handsome face!*” 30

Next follow two, who ought to be now alive, and the friends of Elia — the junior Le G—— and F——; who impelled, the former by a roving temper, the latter by too quick a sense of neglect — ill capable of enduring the slights poor Sizars are

sometimes subject to in our seats of learning — exchanged their Alma Mater for the camp ; perishing one by climate, and one on the plains of Salamanca : — Le G——, sanguine, volatile, sweet-natured ; F——, dogged, faithful, anticipative of insult, warm-hearted, with something of the old Roman height about him.

Fine, frank-hearted Fr——, the present master of Hertford, with Marmaduke T——, mildest of Missionaries — and both my good friends still — close the catalogue of Grecians in my time.

V. THE TWO RACES OF MEN

THE human species, according to the best theory I can form of it, is composed of two distinct races, *the men who borrow*, and *the men who lend*. To these two original diversities may be reduced all those impertinent classifications of Gothic and 15 Celtic tribes, white men, black men, red men. All the dwellers upon earth, “Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites,” flock hither, and do naturally fall in with one or other of these primary distinctions. The infinite superiority of the former, which I choose to designate as the *great race*, is discernible in 20 their figure, port, and a certain instinctive sovereignty. The latter are born degraded. “He shall serve his brethren.” There is something in the air of one of this cast, lean and suspicious ; contrasting with the open, trusting, generous manners of the other.

25 Observe who have been the greatest borrowers of all ages — Alcibiades — Falstaff — Sir Richard Steele — our late incomparable Brinsley — what a family likeness in all four !

What a careless, even deportment hath your borrower ! what rosy gills ; what a beautiful reliance on Providence doth he 30 manifest, — taking no more thought than lilies ! What contempt for money, — accounting it (yours and mine especially)

no better than dross! What a liberal confounding of those pedantic distinctions of *meum* and *tuum*! or rather, what a noble simplification of language (beyond Tooke), resolving these supposed opposites into one clear, intelligible pronoun adjective! — What near approaches doth he make to the 5 primitive *community*, — to the extent of one-half of the principal at least! —

He is the true taxer “who calleth all the world up to be taxed”; and the distance is as vast between him and *one of us*, as subsisted betwixt the Augustan Majesty and the poorest 10 obolary Jew that paid it tribute-pittance at Jerusalem! — His exactions, too, have such a cheerful, voluntary air! So far removed from your sour parochial or state-gatherers, — those ink-horn varlets, who carry their want of welcome in their faces! He cometh to you with a smile and troubleth you 15 with no receipt; confining himself to no set season. Every day is his Candlemas, or his Feast of Holy Michael. He applieth the *lene tormentum* of a pleasant look to your purse, — which to that gentle warmth expands her silken leaves, as naturally as the cloak of the traveller, for which sun and wind 20 contended! He is the true Propontic which never ebbeth! The sea which taketh handsomely at each man’s hand. In vain the victim, whom he delighteth to honour, struggles with destiny; he is in the net. Lend therefore cheerfully, O man ordained to lend — that thou lose not in the end, with thy 25 worldly penny, the reversion promised. Combine not preposterously in thine own person the penalties of Lazarus and of Dives! — but, when thou seest the proper authority coming, meet it smilingly, as it were half-way. Come, a handsome sacrifice! See how light *he* makes of it! Strain not courtesies 30 with a noble enemy.

Reflections like the foregoing were forced upon my mind by the death of my old friend, Ralph Bigod, Esq., who departed this life on Wednesday evening; dying, as he had lived,

without much trouble. He boasted himself a descendant from mighty ancestors of that name, who heretofore held ducal dignities in this realm. In his actions and sentiments he belied not the stock to which he pretended. Early in life 5 he found himself invested with ample revenues ; which with that noble disinterestedness which I have noticed as inherent in men of the *great race*, he took almost immediate measures entirely to dissipate and bring to nothing : for there is something revolting in the idea of a king holding a private purse ; 10 and the thoughts of Bigod were all regal. Thus furnished by the very act of disfurnishment ; getting rid of the cumbersome luggage of riches, more apt (as one sings)

To slacken virtue, and abate her edge,
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise,

15 he set forth, like some Alexander, upon his great enterprise, “borrowing and to borrow !”

In his periegesis, or triumphant progress throughout this island, it has been calculated that he laid a tithe part of the inhabitants under contribution. I reject this estimate as 20 greatly exaggerated : but having had the honour of accompanying my friend, divers times, in his perambulations about this vast city, I own I was greatly struck at first with the prodigious number of faces we met, who claimed a sort of respectful acquaintance with us. He was one day so obliging as to 25 explain the phenomenon. It seems, these were his tributaries ; feeders of his exchequer ; gentlemen, his good friends (as he was pleased to express himself), to whom he had occasionally been beholden for a loan. Their multitudes did no way disconcert him. He rather took a pride in numbering them ; and, with 30 Comus, seemed pleased to be “stocked with so fair a herd.”

With such sources, it was a wonder how he contrived to keep his treasury always empty. He did it by force of an aphorism, which he had often in his mouth, that “money kept

longer than three days stinks." So he made use of it while it was fresh. A good part he drank away (for he was an excellent toss-pot), some he gave away, the rest he threw away, literally tossing and hurling it violently from him—as boys do burrs, or as if it had been infectious,—into ponds, or 5 ditches, or deep holes,—inscrutable cavities of the earth:—or he would bury it (where he would never seek it again) by a river's side under some bank, which (he would facetiously observe) paid no interest—but out away from him it must go peremptorily, as Hagar's offspring into the wilderness, while 10 it was sweet. He never missed it. The streams were perennial which fed his fisc. When new supplies became necessary, the first person that had the felicity to fall in with him, friend or stranger, was sure to contribute to the deficiency. For Bigod had an *undeniable* way with him. He had a cheerful, open exterior, a quick jovial eye, a bald forehead, just touched with grey (*cana fides*). He anticipated no excuse, and found none. And, waiving for a while my theory as to the *great race*, I would put it to the most untheorizing reader, who may at times have disposable coin in his pocket, whether 15 it is not more repugnant to the kindness of his nature to refuse such a one as I am describing, than to say *no* to a poor petitionary rogue (your bastard borrower), who, by his mumping visnomy, tells you, that he expects nothing better; and therefore, whose preconceived notions and expectations you 20 do in reality so much less shock in the refusal.

When I think of this man; his fiery glow of heart; his swell of feeling; how magnificent, how *ideal* he was; how great at the midnight hour; and when I compare with him the companions with whom I have associated since, I grudge the 25 saving of a few idle ducats, and think that I am fallen into the society of *lenders*, and *little men*.

To one like Elia, whose treasures are rather cased in leather covers than closed in iron coffers, there is a class of alienators

more formidable than that which I have touched upon ; I mean your *borrowers of books* — those mutilators of collections, spoilers of the symmetry of shelves, and creators of odd volumes. There is Comberbatch, matchless in his 5 depredations !

That foul gap in the bottom shelf facing you, like a great eye-tooth knocked out — (you are now with me in my little back study in Bloomsbury, reader !) — with the huge Switzer-like tomes on each side (like the Guildhall giants, in their 10 reformed posture, guardant of nothing) once held the tallest of my folios, *Opera Bonaventurae*, choice and massy divinity, to which its two supporters (school divinity also, but of a lesser calibre, — Bellarmine, and Holy Thomas) showed but as dwarfs, itself an Ascapart ! — *that* Comberbatch abstracted 15 upon the faith of a theory he holds, which is more easy, I confess, for me to suffer by than to refute, namely, that “ the title to property in a book ” (my Bonaventure, for instance) “ is in exact ratio to the claimant’s powers of understanding and appreciating the same.” Should he go on acting upon 20 this theory, which of our shelves is safe ?

The slight vacuum in the left-hand case — two shelves from the ceiling — scarcely distinguishable but by the quick eye of a loser — was whilom the commodious resting-place of Browne on Urn Burial. C. will hardly allege that he knows 25 more about that treatise than I do, who introduced it to him, and was indeed the first (of the moderns) to discover its beauties — but so have I known a foolish lover to praise his mistress in the presence of a rival more qualified to carry her off than himself. — Just below, Dodsley’s dramas want their 30 fourth volume, where Vittoria Corombona is ! The remainder nine are as distasteful as Priam’s refuse sons, when the fates *borrowed* Hector. Here stood the Anatomy of Melancholy, in sober state. — There loitered the Complete Angler ; quiet as in life, by some stream side. — In yonder nook, John

Buncle, a widower-volume, with “eyes closed,” mourns his ravished mate.

One justice I must do my friend, that if he sometimes, like the sea, sweeps away a treasure, at another time, sea-like, he throws up as rich an equivalent to match it. I have a small under-collection of this nature (my friend’s gatherings in his various calls), picked up, he has forgotten at what odd places, and deposited with as little memory as mine. I take in these orphans, the twice-deserted. These proselytes of the gate are welcome as the true Hebrews. There they stand in conjunction; natives, and naturalized. The latter seem as little disposed to inquire out their true lineage as I am.— I charge no warehouse-room for these deodands, nor shall ever put myself to the ungentlemanly trouble of advertising a sale of them to pay expenses.

To lose a volume to C. carries some sense and meaning in it. You are sure that he will make one hearty meal on your viands, if he can give no account of the platter after it. But what moved thee, wayward, spiteful K., to be so importunate to carry off with thee, in spite of tears and adjurations to thee to forbear, the Letters of that princely woman, the thrice noble Margaret Newcastle?— knowing at the time, and knowing that I knew also, thou most assuredly wouldest never turn over one leaf of the illustrious folio:— what but the mere spirit of contradiction, and childish love of getting the better of thy friend?— Then, worst cut of all! to transport it with thee to the Gallican land —

Unworthy land to harbour such a sweetness,
A virtue in which all ennobling thoughts dwelt,
Pure thoughts, kind thoughts, high thoughts, her sex’s wonder! 30

— hadst thou not thy play-books, and books of jests and fancies, about thee, to keep thee merry, even as thou keepest all companies with thy quips and mirthful tales?— Child of

the Green-room, it was unkindly done of thee. Thy wife, too, that part-French, better-part-Englishwoman! — that *she* could fix upon no other treatise to bear away, in kindly token of remembering us, than the works of Fulke Greville, Lord 5 Brook — of which no Frenchman, nor woman of France, Italy, or England, was ever by nature constituted to comprehend a tittle! *Was there not Zimmermann on Solitude?*

Reader, if haply thou art blessed with a moderate collection, be shy of showing it; or if thy heart overfloweth to lend them, 10 lend thy books; but let it be to such a one as S. T. C. — he will return them (generally anticipating the time appointed) with usury; enriched with annotations, tripling their value. I have had experience. Many are these precious MSS. of his — (in *matter* oftentimes, and almost in *quantity* not unfrequently, vying with the originals) — in no very clerkly hand — legible in my Daniel; in old Burton; in Sir Thomas Browne; and those abstruser cogitations of the Greville, now, alas! wandering in Pagan lands. — I counsel thee, shut not thy heart, 15 nor thy library, against S. T. C.

VI. NEW YEAR'S EVE

20 EVERY man hath two birthdays: two days, at least, in every year, which set him upon revolving the lapse of time, as it affects his mortal duration. The one is that which in an especial manner he termeth *his*. In the gradual desuetude of old observances, this custom of solemnizing our proper 25 birthday hath nearly passed away, or is left to children, who reflect nothing at all about the matter, nor understand anything in it beyond cake and orange. But the birth of a New Year is of an interest too wide to be pretermitted by king or cobbler. No one ever regarded the First of January 30 with indifference. It is that from which all date their time,

and count upon what is left. It is the nativity of our common Adam.

Of all sound of all bells — (bells, the music nighest bordering upon heaven) — most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the Old Year. I never hear it without a 5 gathering-up of my mind to a concentration of all the images that have been diffused over the past twelvemonth ; all I have done or suffered, performed or neglected — in that regretted time. I begin to know its worth, as when a person dies. It takes a personal colour ; nor was it a poetical flight in a 10 contemporary, when he exclaimed

I saw the skirts of the departing Year.

It is no more than what in sober sadness every one of us seems to be conscious of, in that awful leave-taking. I am sure I felt it, and all felt it with me, last night ; though some 15 of my companions affected rather to manifest an exhilaration at the birth of the coming year, than any very tender regrets for the decease of its predecessor. But I am none of those who

Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.

I am naturally, beforehand, shy of novelties ; new books, 20 new faces, new years, — from some mental twist which makes it difficult in me to face the prospective. I have almost ceased to hope ; and am sanguine only in the prospects of other (former) years. I plunge into foregone visions and conclusions. I encounter pell-mell with past disappointments. I am 25 armour-proof against old discouragements. I forgive, or overcome in fancy, old adversaries. I play over again *for love*, as the gamesters phrase it, games, for which I once paid so dear. I would scarce now have any of those untoward accidents and events of my life reversed. I would no more 30 alter them than the incidents of some well-contrived novel. Methinks, it is better that I should have pined away seven of

my goldenest years, when I was thrall to the fair hair, and fairer eyes, of Alice W——n, than that so passionate a love-adventure should be lost. It was better that our family should have missed that legacy, which old Dorrell cheated us 5 of, than that I should have at this moment two thousand pounds *in banco*, and be without the idea of that specious old rogue.

In a degree beneath manhood, it is my infirmity to look back upon those early days. Do I advance a paradox, when 10 I say that, skipping over the intervention of forty years, a man may have leave to love *himself*, without the imputation of self-love?

If I know aught of myself, no one whose mind is introspective — and mine is painfully so — can have a less respect for 15 his present identity, than I have for the man Elia. I know him to be light, and vain, and humoursome ; a notorious . . . ; addicted to . . . ; averse from counsel, neither taking it, nor offering it ; — . . . besides ; a stammering buffoon ; what you will ; lay it on, and spare not ; I subscribe to it all, and much 20 more, than thou canst be willing to lay at his door — but for the child Elia — that “other me,” there, in the background — I must take leave to cherish the remembrance of that young master — with as little reference, I protest, to this stupid changeling of five-and-forty, as if it had been a child of 25 some other house, and not of my parents. I can cry over its patient small-pox at five, and rougher medicaments. I can lay its poor fevered head upon the sick pillow at Christ's, and wake with it in surprise at the gentle posture of maternal tenderness hanging over it, that unknown had watched its sleep. 30 I know how it shrank from any the least colour of falsehood. — God help thee, Elia, how art thou changed ! Thou art sophisticated. — I know how honest, how courageous (for a weakling) it was — how religious, how imaginative, how hopeful ! From what have I not fallen, if the child I remember

was indeed myself, — and not some dissembling guardian, presenting a false identity, to give the rule to my unpractised steps, and regulate the tone of my moral being !

That I am fond of indulging, beyond a hope of sympathy, in such retrospection, may be the symptom of some sickly idiosyncrasy. Or is it owing to another cause ; simply, that being without wife or family, I have not learned to project myself enough out of myself ; and having no offspring of my own to dally with, I turn back upon memory, and adopt my own early idea, as my heir and favourite ? If these speculations 10 seem fantastical to thee, reader — (a busy man, perchance), if I tread out of the way of thy sympathy, and am singularly conceited only, I retire, impenetrable to ridicule, under the phantom cloud of Elia.

The elders, with whom I was brought up, were of a character 15 not likely to let slip the sacred observance of any old institution : and the ringing out of the Old Year was kept by them with circumstances of peculiar ceremony. — In those days the sound of those midnight chimes, though it seemed to raise hilarity in all around me, never failed to bring a train of 20 pensive imagery into my fancy. Yet I then scarce conceived what it meant, or thought of it as a reckoning that concerned me. Not childhood alone, but the young man till thirty, never feels practically that he is mortal. He knows it indeed, and, if need were, he could preach a homily on the fragility of 25 life ; but he brings it not home to himself, any more than in a hot June we can appropriate to our imagination the freezing days of December. But now, shall I confess a truth ? — I feel these audits but too powerfully. I begin to count the probabilities of my duration, and to grudge at the expenditure of moments 30 and shortest periods, like miser's farthings. In proportion as the years both lessen and shorten, I set more count upon their periods and would fain lay my ineffectual finger upon the spoke of the great wheel. I am not content to pass away “ like a

weaver's shuttle." Those metaphors solace me not, nor sweeten the unpalatable draught of mortality. I care not to be carried with the tide, that smoothly bears human life to eternity ; and 5 reluct at the inevitable course of destiny. I am in love with this green earth ; the face of town and country ; the unspeakable rural solitudes, and the sweet security of streets. I would set up my tabernacle here. I am content to stand still at the age to which I am arrived ; I, and my friends : to be no younger, no richer, no handsomer. I do not want to be weaned by 10 age ; or drop, like mellow fruit, as they say, into the grave. — Any alteration, on this earth of mine, in diet or in lodging, puzzles and discomposes me. My household gods plant a terrible fixed foot, and are not rooted up without blood. They do not willingly seek Lavinian shores. A new state of being 15 staggers me.

Sun, and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks, and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields, and the delicious juices of meats and fishes, and society, and the cheerful glass, and candle-light, and fireside conversations, and innocent vanities, 20 and jests, and *irony itself* — do these things go out with life ?

Can a ghost laugh, or shake his gaunt sides, when you are pleasant with him ?

And you, my midnight darlings, my Folios ! must I part with the intense delight of having you (huge armfuls) in my 25 embraces ? Must knowledge come to me, if it come at all, by some awkward experiment of intuition, and no longer by this familiar process of reading ?

Shall I enjoy friendships there, wanting the smiling indications which point me to them here, — the recognizable face — 30 the " sweet assurance of a look " ? —

In winter this intolerable disinclination to dying — to give it its mildest name — does more especially haunt and beset me. In a genial August noon, beneath a sweltering sky, death is almost problematic. At those times do such poor snakes as

myself enjoy an immortality. Then we expand and burgeon. Then are we as strong again, as valiant again, as wise again, and a great deal taller. The blast that nips and shrinks me, puts me in thoughts of death. All things allied to the insubstantial, wait upon that master feeling ; cold, numbness, dreams, perplexity ; moonlight itself, with its shadowy and spectral appearances, — that cold ghost of the sun, or Phœbus's sickly sister, like that innutritious one denounced in the Canticles : — I am none of her minions — I hold with the Persian.

Whatsoever thwarts, or puts me out of my way, brings death ¹⁰ into my mind. All partial evils, like humours, run into that capital plague-sore. — I have heard some profess an indifference to life. Such hail the end of their existence as a port of refuge : and speak of the grave as of some soft arms, in which they may slumber as on a pillow. Some have wooed ¹⁵ death — but out upon thee, I say, thou foul, ugly phantom ! I detest, abhor, execrate, and (with Friar John) give thee to six-score thousand devils, as in no instance to be excused or tolerated, but shunned as a universal viper ; to be branded, proscribed, and spoken evil of ! In no way can I be brought to ²⁰ digest thee, thou thin, melancholy *Privation*, or more frightful and confounding *Positive* !

Those antidotes, prescribed against the fear of thee, are altogether frigid and insulting, like thyself. For what satisfaction hath a man, that he shall "lie down with kings and ²⁵ emperors in death," who in his lifetime never greatly coveted the society of such bedfellows ? — or, forsooth, that "so shall the fairest face appear ?" — why, to comfort me, must Alice W——n be a goblin ? More than all, I conceive disgust at those impertinent and misbecoming familiarities, inscribed upon ³⁰ your ordinary tombstones. Every dead man must take upon himself to be lecturing me with his odious truism, that "such as he now is, I must shortly be." Not so shortly, friend, perhaps as thou imaginest. In the meantime I am alive. I move

about. I am worth twenty of thee. Know thy betters ! Thy New Years' Days are past. I survive, a jolly candidate for 1821. Another cup of wine—and while that turn-coat bell, that just now mournfully chanted the obsequies of 1820
5 departed, with changed notes lustily rings in a successor, let us attune to its peal the song made on a like occasion, by hearty, cheerful Mr. Cotton.

THE NEW YEAR

Hark ! the cock crows, and yon bright star
Tells us the day himself's not far ;
10 And see where, breaking from the night,
He gilds the western hills with light.
With him old Janus doth appear,
Peeping into the future year,
With such a look as seems to say,
15 The prospect is not good that way.
Thus do we rise ill sights to see,
And 'gainst ourselves to prophesy ;
When the prophetic fear of things
A more tormenting mischief brings,
20 More full of soul-tormenting gall,
Than direct mischiefs can befall.
But stay ! but stay ! methinks my sight,
Better inform'd by clearer light,
Discerns sereness in that brow,
25 That all contracted seem'd but now.
His revers'd face may show distaste,
And frown upon the ills are past ;
But that which this way looks is clear,
And smiles upon the New-born Year.
30 He looks too from a place so high,
The Year lies open to his eye ;
And all the moments open are
To the exact discoverer.
Yet more and more he smiles upon

The happy revolution.
 Why should we then suspect or fear
 The influences of a year,
 So smiles upon us the first morn,
 And speaks us good so soon as born?
 Plague on't! the last was ill enough,
 This cannot but make better proof;
 Or, at the worst, as we brush'd through
 The last, why so we may this too:
 And then the next in reason should
 Be superexcellently good:
 For the worst ills (we daily see)
 Have no more perpetuity,
 Than the best fortunes that do fall;
 Which also bring us wherewithal
 Longer their being to support,
 Than those do of the other sort:
 And who has one good year in three,
 And yet repines at destiny,
 Appears ungrateful in the case,
 And merits not the good he has.
 Then let us welcome the New Guest
 With lusty brimmers of the best;
 Mirth always should Good Fortune meet,
 And render e'en Disaster sweet:
 And though the Princess turn her back,
 Let us but line ourselves with sack,
 We better shall by far hold out,
 Till the next Year she face about.

How say you, reader — do not these verses smack of the 30
 rough magnanimity of the old English vein? Do they not
 fortify like a cordial; enlarging the heart, and productive of
 sweet blood, and generous spirits, in the concoction? Where
 be those puling fears of death, just now expressed or affected?
 — Passed like a cloud — absorbed in the purging sunlight 35
 of clear poetry — clean washed away by a wave of genuine

Helicon, your only Spa for these hypochondries — And now another cup of the generous ! and a merry New Year, and many of them, to you all, my masters !

VII. MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST

“A CLEAR fire, a clean hearth,¹ and the rigour of the game.”

5 This was the celebrated *wish* of old Sarah Battle (now with God), who, next to her devotions, loved a good game at whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half and half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber ; who affirm that they have no pleasure in 10 winning ; that they like to win one game and lose another ;² that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no ; and will desire an adversary, who has slipped a wrong card, to take it up and play another. These insufferable triflers are the curse 15 of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said, that they do not play at cards, but only play at playing at them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them, as I do, from her heart and soul ; and would not, save upon 20 a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. She took, and gave no concessions. She hated favours. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought a 25 good fight : cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her

¹ This was before the introduction of rugs, reader. You must remember the intolerable crash of the unswept cinder, betwixt your foot and the marble.

² As if a sportsman should tell you he liked to kill a fox one day, and lose him the next.

cards) "like a dancer." She sat bolt upright; and neither showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side — their superstitions; and I have heard her declare, under the rose, that Hearts was her favourite suit.

I never in my life — and I knew Sarah Battle many of the 5 best years of it — saw her take out her snuff-box when it was her turn to play; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game; or ring for a servant, till it was fairly over. She never introduced, or connived at, miscellaneous conversation during its process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards: 10 and if I ever saw unmixed distaste in her fine last-century countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take a hand; and who, in his excess of candour, declared, that he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now 15 and then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind! She could not bear to have her noble occupation, to which she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do, — and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards — 20 over a book.

Pope was her favourite author; his *Rape of the Lock* her favourite work. She once did me the favour to play over with me (with the cards) his celebrated game of Ombre in that poem; and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in 25 what points it would be found to differ from, traydrille. Her illustrations were apposite and poignant; and I had the pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles; but I suppose they came too late to be inserted among his ingenious notes upon that author. 30

Quadrille, she has often told me, was her first love; but whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners — a

thing which the constancy of whist abhors ; — the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of Spadille — absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter give him no proper power above his brother-
5 nobility of the Aces ; — the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone ; — above all, the overpowering attractions of a *Sans Prendre Vole*, — to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching, in the contingencies of whist ; — all these, she would say, make quadrille
10 a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the *solider* game : that was her word. It was a long meal ; not, like quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers might co-extend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady
15 enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and ever fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, reminded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian states, depicted by Machiavel ; perpetually changing postures and connections ;
20 bitter foes to-day, sugared darlings to-morrow ; kissing and scratching in a breath ; — but the wars of whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her
25 favourite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage — nothing superfluous. No *flushes* — that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up : — that any one should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and colour, without reference to the playing
30 of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves ! She held this to be a solecism ; as pitiful an ambition at cards as alliteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality, and looked deeper than the colours of things. — Suits were soldiers, she would say, and must have a

uniformity of array to distinguish them : but what should we say to a foolish squire, who should claim a merit from dressing up his tenantry in red jackets that never were to be marshalled — never to take the field? — she even wished that whist were more simple than it is ; and in my mind, would have stripped it of some appendages, which in the state of human frailty, may be venially, and even commendably, allowed of. She saw no reason for the deciding of the trump by the turn of the card. Why not one suit always trumps? — Why two colours, when the mark of the suits would have sufficiently distinguished them without it? —

“ But the eye, my dear madam, is agreeably refreshed with the variety. Man is not a creature of pure reason — he must have his senses delightfully appealed to. We see it in Roman Catholic countries, where the music and the paintings draw in many to worship, whom your quaker spirit of unsensualizing would have kept out. — You, yourself, have a pretty collection of paintings — but confess to me, whether, walking in your gallery at Sandham, among those clear Vandykes, or among the Paul Potters in the ante-room, you ever felt your bosom glow with an elegant delight, at all comparable to *that* you have it in your power to experience most evenings over a well-arranged assortment of the court cards? — the pretty antic habits, like heralds in a procession — the gay triumph-assuring scarlets — the contrasting deadly-killing sables — the ‘ hoary majesty of spades ’ — Pam in all his glory ! —

“ All these might be dispensed with ; and, with their naked names upon the drab pasteboard, the game might go on very well, pictureless. But the *beauty* of cards would be extinguished for ever. Stripped of all that is imaginative in them, they must degenerate into mere gambling. — Imagine a dull deal-board, or drum head, to spread them on, instead of that nice verdant carpet (next to nature’s), fittest arena for those courtly combatants to play their gallant jousts and tourneys in !

— Exchange those delicately-turned ivory markers— (work of Chinese artist, unconscious of their symbol, — or as profanely slighting their true application as the arrantest Ephesian journeyman that turned out those little shrines for the goddess) —
5 exchange them for little bits of leather (our ancestors' money) or chalk and a slate ! ” —

The old lady, with a smile, confessed the soundness of my logic ; and to her approbation of my arguments on her favourite topic that evening, I have always fancied myself indebted
10 for the legacy of a curious cribbage-board, made of the finest Sienna marble, which her maternal uncle (old Walter Plumer, whom I have elsewhere celebrated) brought with him from Florence : — this, and a trifle of five hundred pounds, came to me at her death.

15 The former bequest (which I do not least value) I have kept with religious care ; though she herself, to confess a truth, was never greatly taken with cribbage. It was an essentially vulgar game, I have heard her say, — disputing with her uncle, who was very partial to it. She could never
20 heartily bring her mouth to pronounce “*go*” — or “*that's a go*.” She called it an ungrammatical game. The pegging teased her. I once knew her to forfeit a rubber (a five dollar stake), because she would not take advantage of the turn-up knave, which would have given it her, but which she must
25 have claimed by the disgraceful tenure of declaring “*two for his heels*.” There is something extremely genteel in this sort of self-denial. Sarah Battle was a gentlewoman born.

Piquet she held the best game at the cards for two persons, though she would ridicule the pedantry of the terms — such
30 as pique — repique — the capot — they savoured (she thought) of affectation. But games for two, or even three, she never greatly cared for. She loved the quadrate, or square. She would argue thus : — Cards are warfare : the ends are gain, with glory. But cards are war in disguise of a sport : when

single adversaries encounter, the ends proposed are too palpable. By themselves, it is too close a fight; with spectators, it is not much bettered. No looker-on can be interested, except for a bet, and then it is a mere affair of money; he cares not for your luck *sympathetically*, or for your play.— 5 Three are still worse; a mere naked war of every man against every man, as in cribbage, without league or alliance; or a rotation of petty and contradictory interests, a succession of heartless leagues, and not much more hearty infractions of them, as in traydrille.— But in square games (*she meant whist*) 10 all that is possible to be attained in card-playing is accomplished. There are the incentives of profit with honour, common to every species—though the *latter* can be but very imperfectly enjoyed in those other games, where the spectator is only feebly a participator. But the parties in whist 15 are spectators and principals too. They are a theatre to themselves, and a looker-on is not wanted. He is rather worse than nothing, and an impertinence. Whist abhors neutrality, or interests beyond its sphere. You glory in some surprising stroke of skill or fortune, not because a cold—or even an 20 interested—bystander witnesses it, but because your *partner* sympathizes in the contingency. You win for two. You triumph for two. Two are exalted. Two again are mortified; which divides their disgrace, as the conjunction doubles (by taking off the invidiousness) your glories. Two losing 25 to two are better reconciled, than one to one in that close butchery. The hostile feeling is weakened by multiplying the channels. War becomes a civil game.— By such reasonings as these the old lady was accustomed to defend her favourite pastime. 30

No inducement could ever prevail upon her to play at any game, where chance entered into the composition, *for nothing*. Chance, she would argue—and here again, admire the subtlety of her conclusion!— chance is nothing, but where something

else depends upon it. It is obvious that cannot be *glory*. What rational cause of exultation could it give to a man to turn up size ace a hundred times together by himself? or before spectators, where no stake was depending? — Make 5 a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number — and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively, without a prize? — Therefore she disliked the mixture of chance in backgammon, where it was 10 not played for money. She called it foolish, and those people idiots, who were taken with a lucky hit under such circumstances. Games of pure skill were as little to her fancy. Played for a stake, they were a mere system of over-reaching. Played for glory, they were a mere setting of one 15 man's wit — his memory, or combination-faculty rather — against another's ; like a mock-engagement at a review, bloodless and profitless. — She could not conceive a *game* wanting the sprightly infusion of chance, — the handsome excuses of good fortune. Two people playing at chess in a corner of a 20 room, whilst whist was stirring in the centre, would inspire her with insufferable horror and ennui. Those well-cut similitudes of Castles and Knights, the *imagery* of the board, she would argue (and I think in this case justly), were entirely misplaced and senseless. Those hard head-contests can in no 25 instance ally with the fancy. They reject form and colour. A pencil and dry slate (she used to say) were the proper arena for such combatants.

To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad passions, she would retort that man is a gaming animal. He 30 must be always trying to get the better in something or other : — that this passion can scarcely be more safely expended than upon a game at cards : that cards are a temporary illusion ; in truth, a mere drama ; for we do but *play* at being mightily concerned, where a few idle shillings are at stake, yet, during

the illusion, we *are* as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream-fighting; much ado; great battling and little bloodshed; mighty means for disproportioned ends; quite as diverting, and a great deal more innoxious, than many of those more serious *games* of life, 5 which men play, without esteeming them to be such.—

With great deference to the old lady's judgment on these matters, I think I have experienced some moments in my life, when playing at cards *for nothing* has even been agreeable. When I am in sickness, or not in the best spirits, I sometimes 10 call for the cards, and play a game at piquet *for love* with my cousin Bridget—Bridget Elia.

I grant there is something sneaking in it: but with a toothache, or a sprained ankle,—when you are subdued and humble,—you are glad to put up with an inferior spring of 15 action.

There is such a thing in nature, I am convinced, as *sick whist*.—

I grant it is not the highest style of man—I deprecate the manes of Sarah Battle—she lives not, alas! to whom I should 20 apologize.—

At such times, those *terms* which my old friend objected to, come in as something admissible.—I love to get a tierce or a quatorze, though they mean nothing. I am subdued to an inferior interest. Those shadows of winning amuse me. 25

That last game I had with my sweet cousin (I capotted her)—(dare I tell thee, how foolish I am?)—I wished it might have lasted for ever, though we gained nothing, and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play: I would be content to go on in that idle folly for ever. The pipkin should be ever 30 boiling, that was to prepare the gentle lenitive to my foot, which Bridget was doomed to apply after the game was over: and as I do not much relish appliances, there it should ever bubble. Bridget and I should be ever playing.

VIII. VALENTINE'S DAY

HAIL to thy returning festival, old Bishop Valentine ! Great is thy name in the rubric, thou venerable Arch-flamen of Hymen ! Immortal Go-between ! who and what manner of person art thou ? Art thou but a *name*, typifying the restless principle which 5 impels poor humans to seek perfection in union ? or wert thou indeed a mortal prelate, with thy tippet and thy rochet, thy apron on, and decent lawn sleeves ? Mysterious personage ! like unto thee, assuredly, there is no other mitred father in the calendar ; not Jerome, nor Ambrose, nor Cyril ; nor the consigner of 10 undipped infants to eternal torments, Austin, whom all mothers hate ; nor he who hated all mothers, Origen ; nor Bishop Bull, nor Archbishop Parker, nor Whitgift. Thou comest attended with thousands and ten thousands of little Loves, and the air is

Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings.

15 Singing Cupids are thy choristers and thy precentors ; and instead of the crozier, the mystical arrow is borne before thee.

In other words, this is the day on which those charming little missives, ycleped Valentines, cross and intercross each other at every street and turning. The weary and all forespent two-
20 penny postman sinks beneath a load of delicate embarrassments, not his own. It is scarcely credible to what an extent this ephemeral courtship is carried on in this loving town, to the great enrichment of porters, and detriment of knockers and bell-wires. In these little visual interpretations, no emblem is so
25 common as the *heart*, — that little three-cornered exponent of all our hopes and fears, — the bestuck and bleeding heart ; it is twisted and tortured into more allegories and affectations than an opera hat. What authority we have in history or mythology for placing the head-quarters and metropolis of God
30 Cupid in this anatomical seat rather than in any other, is not

very clear ; but we have got it, and it will serve as well as any other. Else we might easily imagine, upon some other system which might have prevailed for anything which our pathology knows to the contrary, a lover addressing his mistress, in perfect simplicity of feeling, "Madam, my *liver* and fortune 5 are entirely at your disposal ;" or putting a delicate question, "Amanda, have you a *midriff* to bestow ?" But custom has settled these things, and awarded the seat of sentiment to the aforesaid triangle, while its less fortunate neighbours wait at animal and anatomical distance. 10

Not many sounds in life, and I include all urban and all rural sounds, exceed in interest a *knock at the door*. It "gives a very echo to the throne where hope is seated." But its issues seldom answer to this oracle within. It is so seldom that just the person we want to see comes. But of all the clamorous 15 visitations the welcomest in expectation is the sound that ushers in, or seems to usher in, a Valentine. As the raven himself was hoarse that announced the fatal entrance of Duncan, so the knock of the postman on this day is light, airy, confident, and befitting one that bringeth good tidings. It is less mechanical than on other days ; you will say, "that is not the post, I am sure." Visions of Love, of Cupids, of Hymens ! — delightful eternal commonplaces, which "having been will always be ;" which no school-boy nor school-man can write away ; having your irreversible throne in the fancy and affections — what are 25 your transports, when the happy maiden, opening with careful finger, careful not to break the emblematic seal, bursts upon the sight of some well-designed allegory, some type, some youthful fancy, not without verses —

30
Lovers all,
A madrigal,

or some such device, not over-abundant in sense — young Love disclaims it, — and not quite silly — something between wind

and water, a chorus where the sheep might almost join the shepherd, as they did, or as I apprehend they did, in Arcadia.

All Valentines are not foolish ; and I shall not easily forget thine, my kind friend (if I may have leave to call you so)

5 E. B.—E. B. lived opposite a young maiden, whom he had often seen, unseen, from his parlour window in C—e Street. She was all joyousness and innocence, and just of an age to enjoy receiving a Valentine, and just of a temper to bear the disappointment of missing one with good humour. E. B. is

10 an artist of no common powers ; in the fancy parts of designing, perhaps inferior to none ; his name is known at the bottom of many a well-executed vignette in the way of his profession, but no further ; for E. B. is modest, and the world meets nobody half-way. E. B. meditated how he could repay this

15 young maiden for many a favour which she had done him unknown ; for when a kindly face greets us, though but passing by, and never knows us again, nor we it, we should feel it as an obligation ; and E. B. did. This good artist set himself at work to please the damsel. It was just before Valentine's

20 day three years since. He wrought, unseen, and unsuspected, a wondrous work. We need not say it was on the finest gilt paper, with borders — full, not of common hearts and heartless allegory, but all the prettiest stories of love from Ovid and older poets than Ovid (for E. B. is a scholar). There was

25 Pyramus and Thisbe, and be sure Dido was not forgot, nor Hero and Leander, and swans more than sang in Cayster, with mottoes and fanciful devices, such as beseemed — a work in short of magic. Iris dipt the woof. This on Valentine's eve he commended to the all-swallowing indiscriminate orifice

30 — (O ignoble trust !) — of the common post ; but the humble medium did its duty, and from his watchful stand, the next morning, he saw the cheerful messenger knock, and by-and-by the precious charge delivered. He saw, unseen, the happy girl unfold the Valentine, dance about, clap her hands, as

one after one the pretty emblems unfolded themselves. She danced about, not with light love or foolish expectations, for she had no lover; or, if she had, none she knew that could have created those bright images which delighted her. It was more like some fairy present; a God-send, as our familiarly pious ancestors termed a benefit received, where the benefactor was unknown. It would do her no harm. It would do her good for ever after. It is good to love the unknown. I only give this as a specimen of E. B. and his modest way of doing a concealed kindness.

“Good-morrow to my Valentine,” sings poor Ophelia; and no better wish, but with better auspices, we wish to all faithful lovers, who are not too wise to despise old legends, but are content to rank themselves humble diocesans of old Bishop Valentine, and his true church.

IX. A QUAKERS' MEETING

Still-born Silence! thou that art
 Flood-gate of the deeper heart!
 Offspring of a heavenly kind!
 Frost o' the mouth, and thaw o' the mind!
 Secrecy's confidant, and he
 Who makes religion mystery!
 Admiral's speaking'st tongue!
 Leave, thy desert shades among,
 Reverend hermits' hallow'd cells,
 Where retired devotion dwells!
 With thy enthusiasms come,
 Seize our tongues, and strike us dumb!

FLECKNO.¹

READER, wouldst thou know what true peace and quiet mean; wouldst thou find a refuge from the noises and clamours of the multitude; wouldst thou enjoy at once solitude and society; wouldst thou possess the depth of thy own

¹ “Love's Dominion.”

spirit in stillness, without being shut out from the consolatory faces of thy species ; wouldest thou be alone, and yet accompanied ; solitary, yet not desolate ; singular, yet not without some to keep thee in countenance ; a unit in aggregate ; a simple in composite :— come with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

Dost thou love silence as deep as that “ before the winds were made ? ” go not out into the wilderness, descend not into the profundities of the earth ; shut not up thy casements ; 10 nor pour wax into the little cells of thy ears, with little-faithed self-mistrusting Ulysses.— Retire with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

For a man to refrain even from good words, and to hold his peace, it is commendable ; but for a multitude, it is great 15 mastery.

What is the stillness of the desert, compared with this place ? what the uncommunicating muteness of fishes ? — here the goddess reigns and revels.— “ Boreas, and Cesias, and Argestes loud,” do not with their inter-confounding 20 uproars more augment the brawl — nor the waves of the blown Baltic with their clubbed sounds — than their opposite (Silence her sacred self) is multiplied and rendered more intense by numbers and by sympathy. She too hath her deeps, that call unto deeps. Negation itself hath a positive 25 more and less ; and closed eyes would seem to obscure the great obscurity of midnight.

There are wounds, which an imperfect solitude cannot heal. By imperfect I mean that which a man enjoyeth by himself. The perfect is that which he can sometimes attain in crowds, 30 but nowhere so absolutely as in a Quakers' Meeting.— Those first hermits did certainly understand this principle, when they retired into Egyptian solitudes, not singly, but in shoals, to enjoy one another's want of conversation. The Carthusian is bound to his brethren by this agreeing spirit of

incommunicativeness. In secular occasions, what so pleasant as to be reading a book through a long winter evening, with a friend sitting by — say, a wife — he, or she, too (if that be probable), reading another, without interruption, or oral communication? — can there be no sympathy without the gabble 5 of words? — away with this inhuman, shy, single, shade-and-cavern-haunting solitariness. Give me, Master Zimmermann, a sympathetic solitude.

To pace alone in the cloisters, or side aisles of some cathedral, time-stricken ; 10

Or under hanging mountains,
Or by the fall of fountains;

is but a vulgar luxury, compared with that which those enjoy, who come together for the purposes of more complete, abstracted solitude. This is the loneliness “to be felt.” — 15 The Abbey Church of Westminster hath nothing so solemn, so spirit-soothing, as the naked walls and benches of a Quakers’ Meeting. Here are no tombs, no inscriptions,

— sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruin’d sides of kings — 20

but here is something, which throws Antiquity herself into the foreground — SILENCE — eldest of things — language of old Night — primitive Discourser — to which the insolent decays of moulderling grandeur have but arrived by a violent, and, as we may say, unnatural progression. 25

How reverend is the view of these hush’d heads
Looking tranquillity!

Nothing-plotting, nought-caballing, unmischievous synod ! convocation without intrigue ! parliament without debate ! what a lesson dost thou read to council, and to consistory ! — if my 30 pen treat of you lightly — as haply it will wander — yet my

spirit hath gravely felt the wisdom of your custom, when sitting among you in deepest peace, which some out-welling tears would rather confirm than disturb, I have reverted to the times of your beginnings, and the sowings of the seed by Fox and 5 Dewesbury. — I have witnessed that, which brought before my eyes your heroic tranquillity, inflexible to the rude jests and serious violences of the insolent soldiery, republican or royalist, sent to molest you — for ye sate betwixt the fires of two persecutions, the out-cast and off-scouring of church and presby- 10 tery, — I have seen the reeling sea-ruffian, who had wandered into your receptacle, with the avowed intention of disturbing your quiet, from the very spirit of the place receive in a moment a new heart, and presently sit among ye as a lamb amidst lambs. And I remembered Penn before his accusers, 15 and Fox in the bail-dock, where he was lifted up in spirit, as he tells us, and “the Judge and the Jury became as dead men under his feet.”

Reader, if you are not acquainted with it, I would recommend to you, above all church-narratives, to read Sewel's 20 History of the Quakers. It is in folio, and is the abstract of the journals of Fox, and the Primitive Friends. It is far more edifying and affecting than anything you will read of Wesley and his colleagues. Here is nothing to stagger you, nothing to make you mistrust, no suspicion of alloy, no drop or dred of 25 the worldly or ambitious spirit. You will here read the true story of that much-injured, ridiculed man (who perhaps hath been a by-word in your mouth), — James Naylor : what dreadful sufferings, with what patience, he endured, even to the boring through of his tongue with red-hot irons without a mur- 30 mur ; and with what strength of mind, when the delusion he had fallen into, which they stigmatized for blasphemy, had given way to clearer thoughts, he could renounce his error, in a strain of the beautifullest humility, yet keep his first grounds, and be a Quaker still ! — so different from the practice of your

common converts from enthusiasm, who, when they apostatize, *apostatize all*, and think they can never get far enough from the society of their former errors, even to the renunciation of some saving truths, with which they had been mingled, not implicated. 5

Get the writings of John Woolman by heart; and love the early Quakers.

How far the followers of these good men in our days have kept to the primitive spirit, or in what proportion they have substituted formality for it, the Judge of Spirits can alone 10 determine. I have seen faces in their assemblies, upon which the dove sat visibly brooding. Others again I have watched, when my thoughts should have been better engaged, in which I could possibly detect nothing but a blank inanity. But quiet was in all, and the disposition to unanimity, and the 15 absence of the fierce controversial workings.—If the spiritual pretensions of the Quakers have abated, at least they make few pretences. Hypocrites they certainly are not, in their preaching. It is seldom indeed that you shall see one get up amongst them to hold forth. Only now and then a trembling 20 female, generally *ancient*, voice is heard—you cannot guess from what part of the meeting it proceeds—with a low, buzzing, musical sound, laying out a few words which “she thought might suit the condition of some present,” with a quaking diffidence which leaves no possibility of supposing that anything 25 of female vanity was mixed up, where the tones were so full of tenderness, and a restraining modesty.—The men, from what I have observed, speak seldom.

Once only, and it was some years ago, I witnessed a sample of the old Foxian orgasm. It was a man of giant stature, who, 30 as Wordsworth phrases it, might have danced “from head to foot equipt in iron mail.” His frame was of iron too. But *he* was malleable. I saw him shake all over with the spirit—I dare not say, of delusion. The strivings of the outer man were

unutterable — he seemed not to speak, but to be spoken from. I saw the strong man bowed down, and his knees to fail — his joints all seemed loosening — it was a figure to set off against Paul preaching — the words he uttered were few, and sound 5 — he was evidently resisting his will — keeping down his own word-wisdom with more mighty effort, than the world's orators strain for theirs. “He had been a Wit in his youth,” he told us, with expressions of a sober remorse. And it was not till long after the impression had begun to wear away, that I was 10 enabled, with something like a smile, to recall the striking incongruity of the confession — understanding the term in its worldly acceptation — with the frame and physiognomy of the person before me. His brow would have scared away the Levites — the Jocos Risus-que — faster than the Loves fled 15 15 the face of Dis at Enna. — By *wit*, even in his youth, I will be sworn he understood something far within the limits of an allowable liberty.

More frequently the Meeting is broken up without a word having been spoken. But the mind has been fed. You go 20 away with a sermon, not made with hands. You have been in the milder caverns of Trophonius ; or as in some den, where that fiercest and savagest of all wild creatures, the TONGUE, that unruly member, has strangely lain tied up and captive. You have bathed with stillness. — O when the spirit is sore 25 fretted, even tired to sickness of the janglings, and nonsense-noises of the world, what a balm and a solace it is, to go and seat yourself, for a quiet half-hour, upon some undisputed corner of a bench, among the gentle Quakers !

Their garb and stillness conjoined, present an uniformity, 30 tranquil and herdlike — as in the pasture — “forty feeding like one.” —

The very garments of a Quaker seem incapable of receiving a soil ; and cleanliness in them to be something more than the absence of its contrary. Every Quakeress is a lily ; and

when they come up in bands to their Whitsun-conferences, whitening the easterly streets of the metropolis, from all parts of the United Kingdom, they show like troops of the Shining Ones.

X. MY RELATIONS

I AM arrived at that point of life, at which a man may 5 account it a blessing, as it is a singularity, if he have either of his parents surviving. I have not that felicity — and sometimes think feelingly of a passage in "Browne's Christian Morals," where he speaks of a man that hath lived sixty or seventy years in the world. "In such a compass of time," he 10 says, "a man may have a close apprehension what it is to be forgotten, when he hath lived to find none who could remember his father, or scarcely the friends of his youth, and may sensibly see with what a face in no long time OBLIVION will look upon himself." 15

I had an aunt, a dear and good one. She was one whom single blessedness had soured to the world. She often used to say, that I was the only thing in it which she loved ; and, when she thought I was quitting it, she grieved over me with mother's tears. A partiality quite so exclusive my reason can- 20 not altogether approve. She was from morning till night poring over good books, and devotional exercises. Her favourite volumes were Thomas à Kempis, in Stanhope's Translation ; and a Roman Catholic Prayer-Book, with the *matins* and *complines* regularly set down,— terms which I was at that time too 25 young to understand. She persisted in reading them, although admonished daily concerning their Papistical tendency ; and went to church every Sabbath, as a good Protestant should do. These were the only books she studied ; though, I think, at one period of her life, she told me she had read with 30 great satisfaction the "Adventures of an Unfortunate Young

Nobleman." Finding the door of the chapel in Essex Street open one day — it was in the infancy of that heresy — she went in, liked the sermon, and the manner of worship, and frequented it at intervals for some time after. She came not for doctrinal points, and never missed them. With some little asperities in her constitution, which I have above hinted at, she was a steadfast friendly being, and a fine *old Christian*. She was a woman of strong sense, and a shrewd mind — extraordinary at a *repartee*; one of the few occasions of her breaking silence — else she did not much value wit. The only secular employment I remember to have seen her engaged in, was, the splitting of French beans, and dropping them into a China basin of fair water. The odour of those tender vegetables to this day comes back upon my sense, redolent of soothing recollections. 15 Certainly it is the most delicate of culinary operations.

Male aunts, as somebody calls them, I had none — to remember. By the uncle's side I may be said to have been born an orphan. Brother, or sister, I never had any — to know them. A sister, I think, that should have been Elizabeth, 20 died in both our infancies. What a comfort, or what a care, may I not have missed in her! — But I have cousins, sprinkled about in Hertfordshire — besides *two*, with whom I have been all my life in habits of the closest intimacy, and whom I may term cousins *par excellence*. These are James and Bridget Elia. 25 They are older than myself by twelve, and ten, years; and neither of them seems disposed, in matters of advice and guidance, to waive any of the prerogatives which primogeniture confers. May they continue still in the same mind; and when they shall be seventy-five, and seventy-three, years old (I can- 30 not spare them sooner), persist in treating me in my grand climacteric precisely as a stripling, or younger brother!

James is an inexplicable cousin. Nature hath her unities, which not every critic can penetrate; or, if we feel, we cannot explain them. The pen of Yorick, and none since his, could

have drawn J. E. entire — those fine Shandean lights and shades, which make up his story. I must limp after in my poor antithetical manner, as the fates have given me grace and talent. J. E. then — to the eye of a common observer at least — seemeth made up of contradictory principles.— The genuine child of impulse, the frigid philosopher of prudence — the phlegm of my cousin's doctrine is invariably at war with his temperament, which is high sanguine. With always some fire-new project in his brain, J. E. is the systematic opponent of innovation, and crier-down of everything that has not stood the 10 test of age and experiment. With a hundred fine notions chasing one another hourly in his fancy, he is startled at the least approach to the romantic in others ; and, determined by his own sense in everything, commends *you* to the guidance of common-sense on all occasions.— With a touch of the eccentric in 15 all which he does, or says, he is only anxious that *you* should not commit yourself by doing anything absurd or singular. On my once letting slip at table, that I was not fond of a certain popular dish, he begged me at any rate not to *say* so — for the world would think me mad. He disguises a passion- 20 ate fondness for works of high art (whereof he hath amassed a choice collection), under the pretext of buying only to sell again — that his enthusiasm may give no encouragement to yours. Yet, if it were so, why does that piece of tender pastoral Domenichino hang still by his wall? — is the ball of his 25 sight much more dear to him? — or what picture-dealer can talk like him?

Whereas mankind in general are observed to wrap their speculative conclusions to the bent of their individual humours, *his* theories are sure to be in diametrical opposition 30 to his constitution. He is courageous as Charles of Sweden, upon instinct ; chary of his person, upon principle, as a travelling Quaker.— He has been preaching up to me, all my life, the doctrine of bowing to the great — the necessity

of forms, and manner, to a man's getting on in the world. He himself never aims at either, that I can discover,— and has a spirit, that would stand upright in the presence of the Cham of Tartary. It is pleasant to hear him discourse of 5 patience— extolling it as the truest wisdom— and to see him during the last seven minutes that his dinner is getting ready. Nature never ran up in her haste a more restless piece of workmanship than when she moulded this impetuous cousin— and Art never turned out a more elaborate orator 10 than he can display himself to be, upon his favourite topic of the advantages of quiet, and contentedness in the state, whatever it be, that we are placed in. He is triumphant on this theme, when he has you safe in one of those short stages that ply for the western road, in a very obstructing manner, 15 at the foot of John Murray's street— where you get in when it is empty, and are expected to wait till the vehicle hath completed her just freight— a trying three-quarters of an hour to some people. He wonders at your fidgetiness— “where could we be better than we are, *thus sitting, thus* 20 *consulting?*” — “prefers, for his part, a state of rest to locomotion,” — with an eye all the while upon the coachman — till at length, waxing out of all patience, at *your want of it*, he breaks out into a pathetic remonstrance at the fellow for detaining us so long over the time which he had professed, 25 and declares peremptorily, that “the gentleman in the coach is determined to get out if he does not drive on that instant.”

Very quick at inventing an argument, or detecting a sophistry, he is incapable of attending *you* in any chain of arguing. Indeed he makes wild work with logic; and seems 30 to jump at most admirable conclusions by some process, not at all akin to it. Consonantly enough to this, he hath been heard to deny, upon certain occasions, that there exists such a faculty at all in man as *reason*; and wondereth how man came first to have a conceit of it— enforcing his negation

with all the might of *reasoning* he is master of. He has some speculative notions against laughter, and will maintain that laughing is not natural to *him*—when peradventure the next moment his lungs shall crow like Chanticleer. He says some of the best things in the world — and declarereth that wit is his 5 aversion. It was he who said, upon seeing the Eton boys at play in their grounds — *What a pity to think, that these fine ingenuous lads in a few years will all be changed into frivolous Members of Parliament!*

His youth was fiery, glowing, tempestuous — and in age 10 he discovered no symptom of cooling. This is that which I admire in him. I hate people who meet Time half-way. I am for no compromise with that inevitable spoiler. While he lives, J. E. will take his swing.— It does me good, as I walk towards the street of my daily avocation, on some fine May 15 morning, to meet him marching in a quite opposite direction, with a jolly handsome presence, and shining sanguine face, that indicates some purchase in his eye — a Claude — or a Hobbima — for much of his enviable leisure is consumed at Christie's, and Phillips's — or where not, to pick up pictures, 20 and such gauds. On these occasions he mostly stoppeth me, to read a short lecture on the advantage a person like me possesses above himself, in having his time occupied with business which he *must do* — assureth me that he often feels it hang heavy on his hands — wishes he had fewer holidays — 25 and goes off — Westward Ho ! — chanting a tune to Pall Mall — perfectly convinced that he has convinced me — while I proceed in my opposite direction tuneless.

It is pleasant again to see this Professor of Indifference doing the honours of his new purchase, when he has fairly 30 housed it. You must view it in every light, till *he* has found the best — placing it at this distance, and at that, but always suiting the focus of your sight to his own. You must spy at it through your fingers, to catch the aërial perspective —

though you assure him that to you the landscape shows much more agreeable without that artifice. Woe be to the luckless wight, who does not only not respond to his rapture, but who should drop an unseasonable intimation of preferring one of 5 his anterior bargains to the present! — The last is always his best hit — his “Cynthia of the minute.” — Alas! how many a mild Madonna have I known to *come in* — a Raphael! — keep its ascendancy for a few brief moons — then, after certain intermedial degradations, from the front drawing-room to the 10 back gallery, thence to the dark parlour, — adopted in turn by each of the Carracci, under successive lowering ascriptions of filiation, mildly breaking its fall — consigned to the oblivious lumber-room, *go out* at last a Lucca Giordano, or plain Carlo Maratti! — which things when I beheld — musing upon 15 the chances and mutabilities of fate below — hath made me to reflect upon the altered condition of great personages, or that woful queen of Richard the Second —

— set forth in pomp,
She came adorned hither like sweet May.
20 Sent back like Hallowmas or shortest day.

With great love for *you*, J. E. hath but a limited sympathy with what you feel or do. He lives in a world of his own, and makes slender guesses at what passes in your mind. He never pierces the marrow of your habits. He will tell an old- 25 established playgoer, that Mr. Such-a-one, of So-and-so (naming one of the theatres), is a very lively comedian — as a piece of news! He advertised me but the other day of some pleasant green lanes which he had found out for me, *knowing me to be a great walker*, in my own immediate vicinity — who have 30 haunted the identical spot any time these twenty years! — He has not much respect for that class of feelings which goes by the name of sentimental. He applies the definition of real evil to bodily suffering exclusively — and rejecteth all others

as imaginary. He is affected by the sight or the bare supposition of a creature in pain, to a degree which I have never witnessed out of womankind. A constitutional acuteness to this class of sufferings, may in part account for this. The animal tribe in particular he taketh under his especial protection. A broken-winded or spur-galled horse is sure to find an advocate in him. An over-loaded ass is his client for ever. He is the apostle to the brute kind — the never-failing friend of those who have none to care for them. The contemplation of a lobster boiled, or eels skinned *alive*, will 10 wring him so, that "all for pity he could die." It will take the savour from his palate, and the rest from his pillow, for days and nights. With the intense feeling of Thomas Clarkson, he wanted only the steadiness of pursuit, and unity of purpose, of that "true yoke-fellow with Time," to have effected 15 as much for the *Animal*, as *he* hath done for the *Negro Creation*. But my uncontrollable cousin is but imperfectly formed for purposes which demand co-operation. He cannot wait. His amelioration-plans must be ripened in a day. For this reason he has cut but an equivocal figure in benevolent societies, and combinations for the alleviation of human sufferings. His zeal constantly makes him to outrun, and put out, his coadjutors. He thinks of relieving, — while they think of debating. He was black-balled out of a society for the Relief of * * * because the fervour of his humanity toiled beyond 20 the formal apprehension, and creeping processes, of his associates. I shall always consider this distinction as a patent of nobility in the Elia family !

Do I mention these seeming inconsistencies to smile at, or upbraid, my unique cousin? Marry, heaven, and all good 30 manners, and the understanding that should be between kins-folk, forbid! — With all the strangeness of this *strangest of the Elias* — I would not have him in one jot or tittle other than he is; neither would I barter or exchange my wild kinsman

for the most exact, regular, and every-way consistent kinsman breathing.

In my next, reader, I may perhaps give you some account of my cousin Bridget—if you are not already surfeited with 5 cousins—and take you by the hand, if you are willing to go with us, on an excursion which we made a summer or two since, in search of *more cousins*—

Through the green plains of pleasant Hertfordshire.

XI. MACKERY END, IN HERTFORDSHIRE

BRIDGET ELIA has been my housekeeper for many a long 10 year. I have obligations to Bridget, extending beyond the period of memory. We house together, old bachelor and maid, in a sort of double singleness; with such tolerable comfort, upon the whole, that I, for one, find myself in no 15 sort of disposition to go out upon the mountains, with the rash king's offspring, to bewail my celibacy. We agree pretty well in our tastes and habits—yet so, as “with a difference.” We are generally in harmony, with occasional bickerings—as it should be among near relations. Our sympathies are rather understood, than expressed; and once, upon my dis- 20 sembling a tone in my voice more kind than ordinary, my cousin burst into tears, and complained that I was altered. We are both great readers in different directions. While I am hanging over (for the thousandth time) some passage in old Burton, or one of his strange contemporaries, she is 25 abstracted in some modern tale, or adventure, whereof our common reading-table is daily fed with assiduously fresh supplies. Narrative teases me. I have little concern in the progress of events. She must have a story,—well, ill, or indifferently told—so there be life stirring in it, and plenty 30 of good or evil accidents. The fluctuations of fortune in

fiction — and almost in real life — have ceased to interest, or operate but dully upon me. Out-of-the-way humours and opinions — heads with some diverting twist in them — the oddities of authorship please me most. My cousin has a native disrelish of anything that sounds odd or bizarre. 5 Nothing goes down with her that is quaint, irregular, or out of the road of common sympathy. She “holds Nature more clever.” I can pardon her blindness to the beautiful obliquities of the *Religio Medici*; but she must apologize to me for certain disrespectful insinuations, which she has been pleased 10 to throw out latterly, touching the intellectuals of a dear favourite of mine, of the last century but one — the thrice noble, chaste, and virtuous, — but again somewhat fantastical, and original-brained, generous Margaret Newcastle.

It has been the lot of my cousin, oftener perhaps than I 15 could have wished, to have had for her associates and mine, free-thinkers — leaders, and disciples, of novel philosophies and systems; but she neither wrangles with, nor accepts, their opinions. That which was good and venerable to her, when she was a child, retains its authority over her mind still. 20 She never juggles or plays tricks with her understanding.

We are both of us inclined to be a little too positive; and I have observed the result of our disputes to be almost uniformly this — that in matters of fact, dates, and circumstances, it turns out, that I was in the right, and my cousin in the 25 wrong. But where we have differed upon moral points; upon something proper to be done, or let alone; whatever heat of opposition, or steadiness of conviction, I set out with, I am sure always in the long run, to be brought over to her way of thinking.

I must touch upon the foibles of my kinswoman with a gentle hand, for Bridget does not like to be told of her faults. She hath an awkward trick (to say no worse of it) of reading in company: at which times she will answer *yes* or *no* to a

question, without fully understanding its purport — which is provoking, and derogatory in the highest degree to the dignity of the putter of the said question. Her presence of mind is equal to the most pressing trials of life, but will sometimes 5 desert her upon trifling occasions. When the purpose requires it, and is a thing of moment, she can speak to it greatly ; but in matters which are not stuff of the conscience, she hath been known sometimes to let slip a word less seasonably.

Her education in youth was not much attended to ; and 10 she happily missed all that train of female garniture, which passeth by the name of accomplishments. She was tumbled early, by accident or design, into a spacious closet of good old English reading, without much selection or prohibition, and browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome pasturage. 15 Had I twenty girls, they should be brought up exactly in this fashion. I know not whether their chance in wedlock might not be diminished by it ; but I can answer for it, that it makes (if the worst come to the worst) most incomparable old maids.

In a season of distress, she is the truest comforter ; but 20 in the teasing accidents, and minor perplexities, which do not call out the *will* to meet them, she sometimes maketh matters worse by an excess of participation. If she does not always divide your trouble, upon the pleasanter occasions of life she is sure always to treble your satisfaction. She is 25 excellent to be at play with, or upon a visit ; but best, when she goes a journey with you.

We made an excursion together a few summers since, into Hertfordshire, to beat up the quarters of some of our less-known relations in that fine corn country.

30 The oldest thing I remember is Mackery End ; or Mackarel End, as it is spelt, perhaps more properly, in some old maps of Hertfordshire ; a farm-house, — delightfully situated within a gentle walk from Wheathampstead. I can just remember having been there, on a visit to a great-aunt, when I was a

child under the care of Bridget ; who, as I have said, is older than myself by some ten years. I wish that I could throw into a heap the remainder of our joint existences, that we might share them in equal division. But that is impossible. The house was at that time in the occupation of a substantial yeoman, who had married my grandmother's sister. His name was Gladman. My grandmother was a Bruton, married to a Field. The Gladmans and the Brutons are still flourishing in that part of the county, but the Fields are almost extinct. More than forty years had elapsed since the visit I speak of ; and, 10 for the greater portion of that period, we had lost sight of the other two branches also. Who or what sort of persons inherited Mackery End — kindred or strange folk — we were afraid almost to conjecture, but determined some day to explore.

By somewhat a circuitous route, taking the noble park at 15 Luton in our way from Saint Alban's, we arrived at the spot of our anxious curiosity about noon. The sight of the old farm-house, though every trace of it was effaced from my recollection, affected me with a pleasure which I had not experienced for many a year. For though *I* had forgotten 20 it, *we* had never forgotten being there together, and we had been talking about Mackery End all our lives, till memory on my part became mocked with a phantom of itself, and I thought I knew the aspect of a place, which, when present, O how unlike it was to *that*, which I had conjured up so 25 many times instead of it !

Still the air breathed balmily about it ; the season was in the " heart of June," and I could say with the poet,

But thou, that didst appear so fair
To fond imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation!¹

30

¹ Wordsworth.

Bridget's was more a waking bliss than mine, for she easily remembered her old acquaintance again — some altered features, of course, a little grudged at. At first, indeed, she was ready to disbelieve for joy ; but the scene soon reconfirmed 5 itself in her affections — and she traversed every outpost of the old mansion, to the wood-house, the orchard, the place where the pigeon-house had stood (house and birds were alike flown) — with a breathless impatience of recognition, which was more pardonable perhaps than decorous at the age of fifty odd.
10 But Bridget in some things is behind her years.

The only thing left was to get into the house — and that was a difficulty which to me singly would have been insurmountable : for I am terribly shy in making myself known to strangers and out-of-date kinsfolk. Love, stronger than 15 scruple, winged my cousin in without me ; but she soon returned with a creature that might have sat to a sculptor for the image of Welcome. It was the youngest of the Gladmans ; who, by marriage with a Bruton, had become mistress of the old mansion. A comely brood are the Brutons. Six of them, females, were noted as the handsomest young women in the county. But this adopted Bruton, in my mind, was better than they all — more comely. She was born too late to have remembered me. She just recollects in early life to have had her cousin Bridget once pointed out 20 to her, climbing a stile. But the name of kindred, and of cousinship, was enough. Those slender ties, that prove slight as gossamer in the rending atmosphere of a metropolis, bind faster, as we found it, in hearty, homely, loving Hertfordshire.
25 In five minutes we were as thoroughly acquainted as if we had been born and bred up together ; were familiar, even to the calling each other by our Christian names. So Christians 30 should call one another. To have seen Bridget, and her — it was like the meeting of the two scriptural cousins ! There

was a grace and dignity, an amplitude of form and stature, answering to her mind, in this farmer's wife, which would have shined in a palace — or so we thought it. We were made welcome by husband and wife equally — we, and our friend that was with us. — I had almost forgotten him — but 5 B. F. will not so soon forget that meeting, if peradventure he shall read this on the far-distant shores where the Kangaroo haunts. The fatted calf was made ready, or rather was already so, as if in anticipation of our coming ; and, after an appropriate glass of native wine, never let me forget with 10 what honest pride this hospitable cousin made us proceed to Wheathampstead, to introduce us (as some new-found rarity) to her mother and sister Gladmans, who did indeed know something more of us, at a time when she almost knew nothing. — With what corresponding kindness we were received by 15 them also — how Bridget's memory, exalted by the occasion, warmed into a thousand half-obliterated recollections of things and persons, to my utter astonishment, and her own — and to the astoundment of B. F. who sat by, almost the only thing that was not a cousin there, — old effaced images of more 20 than half-forgotten names and circumstances still crowding back upon her, as words written in lemon come out upon exposure to a friendly warmth, — when I forget all this, then may my country cousins forget me ; and Bridget no more remember, that in the days of weakling infancy I was 25 her tender charge — as I have been her care in foolish manhood since — in those pretty pastoral walks, long ago, about Mackery End, in Hertfordshire.

XII. IMPERFECT SYMPATHIES

I am of a constitution so general, that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things ; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in anything. Those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch.—*Religio Medici*.

5 THAT the author of the *Religio Medici*, mounted upon the airy stilts of abstraction, conversant about notional and conjectural essences ; in whose categories of Being the possible took the upper hand of the actual ; should have overlooked the impertinent individualities of such poor concretions as 10 mankind, is not much to be admired. It is rather to be wondered at, that in the genus of animal he should have condescended to distinguish that species at all. For myself — earth-bound and fettered to the scene of my activities, —

Standing on earth, not rapt above the sky,

15 I confess that I do feel the differences of mankind, national or individual, to an unhealthy excess. I can look with no indifferent eye upon things or persons. Whatever is, is to me a matter of taste or distaste ; or when once it becomes indifferent, it begins to be disrelishing. I am, in plainer 20 words, a bundle of prejudices — made up of likings and dislikings — the veriest thrall to sympathies, apathies, antipathies. In a certain sense, I hope it may be said of me that I am a lover of my species. I can feel for all indifferently, but I cannot feel towards all equally. The more purely-English 25 word that expresses sympathy will better explain my meaning. I can be a friend to a worthy man, who upon another account cannot be my mate or *fellow*. I cannot *like* all people alike.¹

¹ I would be understood as confining myself to the subject of *imperfect sympathies*. To nations or classes of men there can be no direct antipathy. There may be individuals born and constellated so opposite

I have been trying all my life to like Scotchmen, and am obliged to desist from the experiment in despair. They cannot like me—and in truth, I never knew one of that nation who attempted to do it. There is something more plain and ingenuous in their mode of proceeding. We know one another at first sight. There is an order of imperfect intellects (under which mine must be content to rank) which in its constitution is essentially anti-Caledonian. The owners of the sort of faculties I allude to, have minds rather suggestive than comprehensive. They have no pretences to much clearness or 10 precision in their ideas, or in their manner of expressing them. Their intellectual wardrobe (to confess fairly) has few whole pieces in it. They are content with fragments and scattered pieces of Truth. She presents no full front to them—a feature or side-face at the most. Hints and glimpses, germs 15 and crude essays at a system, is the utmost they pretend to. They beat up a little game peradventure—and leave it to

to another individual nature, that the same sphere cannot hold them. I have met with my moral antipodes, and can believe the story of two persons meeting (who never saw one another before in their lives) and instantly fighting.

— We by proof find there should be
 'Twixt man and man such an antipathy,
 That though he can show no just reason why
 For any former wrong or injury,
 Can neither find a blemish in his fame,
 Nor aught in face or feature justly blame,
 Can challenge or accuse him of no evil,
 Yet notwithstanding hates him as a devil.

The lines are from old Heywood's "Hierarchie of Angels," and he subjoins a curious story in confirmation, of a Spaniard who attempted to assassinate a King Ferdinand of Spain, and being put to the rack could give no other reason for the deed but an inveterate antipathy which he had taken to the first sight of the King.

— The cause to which that act compell'd him
 Was, he ne'er loved him since he first beheld him.

knottier heads, more robust constitutions, to run it down. The light that lights them is not steady and polar, but mutable and shifting: waxing, and again waning. Their conversation is accordingly. They will throw out a random 5 word in or out of season, and be content to let it pass for what it is worth. They cannot speak always as if they were upon their oath—but must be understood, speaking or writing, with some abatement. They seldom wait to mature a proposition, but e'en bring it to market in the green ear. 10 They delight to impart their defective discoveries, as they arise, without waiting for their full development. They are no systematizers, and would but err more by attempting it. Their minds, as I said before, are suggestive merely. The 15 brain of a true Caledonian (if I am not mistaken) is constituted upon quite a different plan. His Minerva is born in panoply. You are never admitted to see his ideas in their growth—if, indeed, they do grow, and are not rather put together upon principles of clock-work. You never catch his mind in an undress. He never hints or suggests any- 20 thing, but unlades his stock of ideas in perfect order and completeness. He brings his total wealth into company, and gravely unpacks it. His riches are always about him. He never stoops to catch a glittering something in your presence, to share it with you, before he quite knows whether it 25 be true touch or not. You cannot cry *halves* to anything that he finds. He does not find, but bring. You never witness his first apprehension of a thing. His understanding is always at its meridian—you never see the first dawn, the early streaks. — He has no falterings of self-suspicion. Surmises, guesses, 30 misgivings, half-intuitions, semi-consciousnesses, partial illuminations, dim instincts, embryo conceptions, have no place in his brain, or vocabulary. The twilight of dubiety never falls upon him. Is he orthodox—he has no doubts. Is he an infidel—he has none either. Between the affirmative and

the negative there is no border-land with him. You cannot hover with him upon the confines of truth, or wander in the maze of a probable argument. He always keeps the path. You cannot make excursions with him — for he sets you right. His taste never fluctuates. His morality never abates. He 5 cannot compromise, or understand middle actions. There can be but a right and a wrong. His conversation is as a book. His affirmations have the sanctity of an oath. You must speak upon the square with him. He stops a metaphor like a suspected person in an enemy's country. "A healthy book!" 10 — said one of his countrymen to me, who had ventured to give that appellation to John Buncle, — "did I catch rightly what you said? I have heard of a man in health, and of a healthy state of body, but I do not see how that epithet can be properly applied to a book." Above all, you must beware 15 of indirect expressions before a Caledonian. Clap an extinguisher upon your irony, if you are unhappily blest with a vein of it. Remember you are upon your oath. I have a print of a graceful female after Leonardo da Vinci, which I was showing off to Mr. —. After he had examined it minutely, I 20 ventured to ask him how he liked MY BEAUTY (a foolish name it goes by among my friends) — when he very gravely assured me, that "he had considerable respect for my character and talents" (so he was pleased to say), "but had not given himself much thought about the degree of my personal pretensions." The misconception staggered me, but did not seem much to disconcert him. — Persons of this nation are particularly fond of affirming a truth — which nobody doubts. They do not so properly affirm, as annunciate it. They do indeed appear to have such a love of truth (as if, like virtue, it were 30 valuable for itself) that all truth becomes equally valuable, whether the proposition that contains it be new or old, disputed, or such as is impossible to become a subject of disputation. I was present not long since at a party of North Britons,

where a son of Burns was expected ; and happened to drop a silly expression (in my South British way), that I wished it were the father instead of the son — when four of them started up at once to inform me, that “ that was impossible, because 5 he was dead.” An impracticable wish, it seems, was more than they could conceive. Swift has hit off this part of their character, namely, their love of truth, in his biting way, but with an illiberality that necessarily confines the passage to the margin.¹ The tediousness of these people is certainly 10 provoking. I wonder if they ever tire one another ! — In my early life I had a passionate fondness for the poetry of Burns. I have sometimes foolishly hoped to ingratiate myself with his countrymen by expressing it. But I have always found that a true Scot resents your admiration of his compatriot, even more 15 than he would your contempt of him. The latter he imputes to your “imperfect acquaintance with many of the words which he uses ; ” and the same objection makes it a presumption in you to suppose that you can admire him, — Thomson they seem to have forgotten. Smollett they have neither forgotten 20 nor forgiven for his delineation of Rory and his companion, upon their first introduction to our metropolis. — Speak of Smollett as a great genius, and they will retort upon you Hume’s History compared with *his* Continuation of it. What if the historian had continued Humphrey Clinker?

25 I have, in the abstract, no disrespect for Jews. They are a piece of stubborn antiquity, compared with which Stonehenge

¹ There are some people who think they sufficiently acquit themselves, and entertain their company, with relating facts of no consequence, not at all out of the road of such common incidents as happen every day ; and this I have observed more frequently among the Scots than any other nation, who are very careful not to omit the minutest circumstances of time or place ; which kind of discourse, if it were not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and phrases, as well as accent and gesture peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable. — *Hints towards an Essay on Conversation.*

is in its nonage. They date beyond the pyramids. But I should not care to be in habits of familiar intercourse with any of that nation. I confess that I have not the nerves to enter their synagogues. Old prejudices cling about me. I cannot shake off the story of Hugh of Lincoln. Centuries 5 of injury, contempt, and hate, on the one side,—of cloaked revenge, dissimulation, and hate, on the other, between our and their fathers, must, and ought, to affect the blood of the children. I cannot believe it can run clear and kindly yet; or that a few fine words, such as candour, liberality, the light 10 of a nineteenth century, can close up the breaches of so deadly a disunion. A Hebrew is nowhere congenial to me. He is least distasteful on 'Change — for the mercantile spirit levels all distinctions, as are all beauties in the dark. I boldly confess I do not relish the approximation of Jew and Christian, 15 which has become so fashionable. The reciprocal endearments have, to me, something hypocritical and unnatural in them. I do not like to see the Church and Synagogue kissing and congeeing in awkward postures of an affected civility. If *they* are converted, why do they not come over to us alto- 20 gether? Why keep up a form of separation, when the life of it has fled? If they can sit with us at table, why do they kick at our cookery? I do not understand these half convertites. Jews christianizing — Christians judaizing — puzzle me. I like fish or flesh. A moderate Jew is a more con- 25 founding piece of anomaly than a wet Quaker. The spirit of the synagogue is essentially *separative*. B—— would have been more in keeping if he had abided by the faith of his forefathers. There is a fine scorn in his face, which nature meant to be of — Christians. The Hebrew spirit is strong 30 in him, in spite of his proselytism. He cannot conquer the Shibboleth. How it breaks out, when he sings, "The Children of Israel passed through the Red Sea!" The auditors, for the moment, are as Egyptians to him, and he rides over our

necks in triumph. There is no mistaking him. B—— has a strong expression of sense in his countenance, and it is confirmed by his singing. The foundation of his vocal excellence is sense. He sings with understanding, as Kemble delivered 5 dialogue. He would sing the Commandments, and give an appropriate character to each prohibition. His nation, in general, have not over-sensible countenances. How should they? — but you seldom see a silly expression among them. Gain, and the pursuit of gain, sharpen a man's visage. I 10 never heard of an idiot being born among them. — Some admire the Jewish female-physiognomy. I admire it — but with trembling. Jael had those full dark inscrutable eyes.

In the Negro countenance you will often meet with strong traits of benignity. I have felt yearnings of tenderness towards 15 some of these faces — or rather masks — that have looked out kindly upon one in casual encounters in the streets and highways. I love what Fuller beautifully calls — these “images of God cut in ebony.” But I should not like to associate with them, to share my meals and my good-nights with them 20 — because they are black.

I love Quaker ways, and Quaker worship. I venerate the Quaker principles. It does me good for the rest of the day when I meet any of their people in my path. When I am ruffled or disturbed by any occurrence, the sight, or quiet voice of a 25 Quaker, acts upon me as a ventilator, lightening the air, and taking off a load from the bosom. But I cannot like the Quakers (as Desdemona would say) “to live with them.” I am all over sophisticated — with humours, fancies, craving hourly sympathy.

I must have books, pictures, theatres, chit-chat, scandal, jokes, 30 ambiguities, and a thousand whim-whams, which their simpler taste can do without. I should starve at their primitive banquet. My appetites are too high for the salads which (according to Evelyn) Eve dressed for the angel, my gusto too excited

To sit a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

The indirect answers which Quakers are often found to return to a question put to them may be explained, I think, without the vulgar assumption, that they are more given to evasion and equivocating than other people. They naturally look to their words more carefully, and are more cautious of committing themselves. They have a peculiar character to keep up on this head. They stand in a manner upon their veracity. A Quaker is by law exempted from taking an oath. The custom of resorting to an oath in extreme cases, sanctified as it is by all religious antiquity, is apt (it must be confessed) to introduce into the laxer sort of minds the notion of two kinds of truth — the one applicable to the solemn affairs of justice, and the other to the common proceedings of daily intercourse. As truth bound upon the conscience by an oath can be but truth, so in the common affirmations of the shop and the market-place a latitude is expected and conceded upon questions wanting this solemn covenant. Something less than truth satisfies. It is common to hear a person say, "You do not expect me to speak as if I were upon my oath." Hence a great deal of incorrectness and inadvertency, short of falsehood, creeps into ordinary conversation ; and a kind of secondary or laic-truth is tolerated, where clergy-truth — oath-truth, by the nature of the circumstances, is not required. A Quaker knows none of this distinction. His simple affirmation being received, upon the most sacred occasions, without any further test, stamps a value upon the words which he is to use upon the most indifferent topics of life. He looks to them, naturally, with more severity. You can have of him no more than his word. He knows, if he is caught tripping in a casual expression, he forfeits, for himself, at least, his claim to the invidious exemption. He knows that his syllables are weighed — and how far a consciousness of this particular watchfulness, exerted against a person, has a tendency to produce indirect answers, and a diverting of the question by

honest means, might be illustrated, and the practice justified, by a more sacred example than is proper to be adduced upon this occasion. The admirable presence of mind, which is notorious in Quakers upon all contingencies, might be traced 5 to this imposed self-watchfulness — if it did not seem rather an humble and secular scion of that old stock of religious constancy, which never bent or faltered, in the Primitive Friends, or gave way to the winds of persecution, to the violence of judge or accuser, under trials and racking examinations. “ You will 10 never be the wiser, if I sit here answering your questions till midnight,” said one of those upright Justicers to Penn, who had been putting law-cases with a puzzling subtlety. “ Thereafter as the answers may be,” retorted the Quaker. The astonishing composure of this people is sometimes ludicrously displayed 15 in lighter instances. — I was travelling in a stage-coach with three male Quakers, buttoned up in the straightest non-conformity of their sect. We stopped to bait at Andover, where a meal, partly tea apparatus, partly supper, was set before us. My friends confined themselves to the tea-table. I in my way 20 took supper. When the landlady brought in the bill, the eldest of my companions discovered that she had charged for both meals. This was resisted. Mine hostess was very clamorous and positive. Some mild arguments were used on the part of the Quakers, for which the heated mind of the good lady 25 seemed by no means a fit recipient. The guard came in with his usual peremptory notice. The Quakers pulled out their money, and formally tendered it — so much for tea — I, in humble imitation, tendering mine — for the supper which I had taken. She would not relax in her demand. So they 30 all three quietly put up their silver, as did myself, and marched out of the room, the eldest and gravest going first, with myself closing up the rear, who thought I could not do better than follow the example of such grave and warrantable personages. We got in. The steps went up. The coach

drove off. The murmurs of mine hostess, not very indistinctly or ambiguously pronounced, became after a time inaudible—and now my conscience, which the whimsical scene had for a while suspended, beginning to give some twitches, I waited, in the hope that some justification would be offered by these serious people for the seeming injustice of their conduct. To my great surprise, not a syllable was dropped on the subject. They sate as mute as at a meeting. At length the eldest of them broke silence, by inquiring of his next neighbour, “Hast thee heard how indigos go at the India House?” and the question operated as a soporific on my moral feeling as far as Exeter. 5 10

XIII. THE OLD BENCHERS OF THE INNER TEMPLE

I WAS born, and passed the first seven years of my life in the Temple. Its church, its halls, its gardens, its fountain, its river, I had almost said—for in those young years, what 15 was this king of rivers to me but a stream that watered our pleasant places? these are of my oldest recollections. I repeat, to this day, no verses to myself more frequently, or with kindlier emotion, than those of Spenser, where he speaks of this spot. 20

There when they came, whereas those bricky towers,
The which on Themmes brode aged back doth ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whylome wont the Templer knights to bide,
Till they decayed through pride. 25

Indeed, it is the most elegant spot in the metropolis. What a transition for a countryman visiting London for the first time—the passing from the crowded Strand or Fleet Street, by

unexpected avenues, into its magnificent ample squares, its classic green recesses ! What a cheerful, liberal look hath that portion of it, which, from three sides, overlooks the greater garden : that goodly pile

5

Of building strong, albeit of Paper hight,

confronting, with massy contrast, the lighter, older, more fantastically shrouded one, named of Harcourt, with the cheerful Crown-office Row (place of my kindly engendure), right opposite the stately stream, which washes the garden-foot with her yet scarcely trade-polluted waters, and seems but just weaned from her Twickenham Naiades ! a man would give something to have been born in such places. What a collegiate aspect has that fine Elizabethan hall, where the fountain plays, which I have made to rise and fall, how many times ! to the astound-
15 ment of the young urchins, my contemporaries, who, not being able to guess at its recondite machinery, were almost tempted to hail the wondrous work as magic ! What an antique air had the now almost effaced sun-dials, with their moral inscriptions, seeming coevals with that Time which they measured, and to
20 take their revelations of its flight immediately from heaven, holding correspondence with the fountain of light ! How would the dark line steal imperceptibly on, watched by the eye of childhood, eager to detect its movement, never catched, nice as an evanescent cloud, or the first arrests of sleep !

25

Ah ! yet doth beauty like a dial-hand
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived !

What a dead thing is a clock, with its ponderous embowels of lead and brass, its pert or solemn dulness of communication, compared with the simple altar-like structure, and
30 silent heart-language of the old dial ! It stood as the garden god of Christian gardens. Why is it almost everywhere vanished ? If its business-use be superseded by more elaborate

inventions, its moral uses, its beauty, might have pleaded for its continuance. It spoke of moderate labours, of pleasures not protracted after sunset, of temperance, and good hours. It was the primitive clock, the horologe of the first world. Adam could scarce have missed it in Paradise. It was the 5 measure appropriate for sweet plants and flowers to spring by, for the birds to apportion their silver warblings by, for flocks to pasture and be led to fold by. The shepherd "carved it out quaintly in the sun;" and, turning philosopher by the very occupation, provided it with mottoes more touching than tomb- 10 stones. It was a pretty device of the gardener, recorded by Marvell, who, in the days of artificial gardening, made a dial out of herbs and flowers. I must quote his verses a little higher up, for they are full, as all his serious poetry was, of a witty delicacy. They will not come in awkwardly, I hope, in a talk of fountains 15 and sun-dials. He is speaking of sweet garden scenes :

What wonderous life is this I lead !

Ripe apples drop about my head.

The luscious clusters of the vine

Upon my mouth do crush their wine.

20

The nectarine, and curious peach,

Into my hands themselves do reach.

Stumbling on melons, as I pass,

Insnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind from pleasure less

25

Withdraws into its happiness ;

The mind, that ocean, where each kind

Does straight its own resemblance find ;

Yet it creates, transcending these,

Far other worlds and other seas ;

30

Annihilating all that's made

To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,

Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,

Casting the body's vest aside,

35

My soul into the boughs does glide :
 There like a bird it sits and sings,
 Then whets and claps its silver wings ;
 And, till prepared for longer flight,
 5 Waves in its plumes the various light.
 How well the skilful gardener drew,
 Of flowers and herbs, this dial new !
 Where, from above the milder sun
 Does through a fragrant zodiac run ;
 10 And, as it works, the industrious bee
 Computes its time as well as we.
 How could such sweet and wholesome hours
 Be reckon'd, but with herbs and flowers ?¹

The artificial fountains of the metropolis are, in like manner,
 15 fast vanishing. Most of them are dried up, or bricked over. Yet, where one is left, as in that little green nook behind the South-Sea House, what a freshness it gives to the dreary pile ! Four little winged marble boys used to play their virgin fancies, spouting out ever fresh streams from their innocent wanton lips, 20 in the square of Lincoln's Inn, when I was no bigger than they were figured. They are gone, and the spring choked up. The fashion, they tell me, is gone by, and these things are esteemed childish. Why not then gratify children, by letting them stand ? Lawyers, I suppose, were children once. They are awakening 25 images to them at least. Why must everything smack of man, and mannish ? Is the world all grown up ? Is childhood dead ? Or is there not in the bosoms of the wisest and the best some of the child's heart left, to respond to its earliest enchantments ? The figures were grotesque. Are the stiff-wigged living figures, 30 that still flutter and chatter about that area, less Gothic in appearance ? or is the splutter of their hot rhetoric one half so refreshing and innocent as the little cool playful streams those exploded cherubs uttered ?

¹ From a copy of verses entitled *The Garden*.

They have lately gothicized the entrance to the Inner Temple-hall, and the library front, to assimilate them, I suppose, to the body of the hall, which they do not at all resemble. What is become of the winged horse that stood over the former? a stately arms! and who has removed those 5 frescoes of the Virtues, which Italianized the end of the Paper-buildings? — my first hint of allegory! They must account to me for these things, which I miss so greatly.

The terrace is, indeed, left, which we used to call the parade; but the traces are passed away of the footsteps 10 which made its pavement awful! It is become common and profane. The old benchers had it almost sacred to themselves, in the fore part of the day at least. They might not be sided or jostled. Their air and dress asserted the parade. You left wide spaces betwixt you, when you 15 passed them. We walk on even terms with their successors. The roguish eye of J——ll, ever ready to be delivered of a jest, almost invites a stranger to vie a repartee with it. But what insolent familiar durst have mated Thomas Coventry? — whose person was a quadrate, his step massy and elephantine, 20 his face square as the lion's, his gait peremptory and path-keeping, indivisible from his way as a moving column, the scarecrow of his inferiors, the brow-beater of equals and superiors, who made a solitude of children wherever he came, for they fled his insufferable presence, as they would have shunned an 25 Elisha bear. His growl was as thunder in their ears, whether he spake to them in mirth or in rebuke, his invitatory notes being, indeed, of all, the most repulsive and horrid. Clouds of snuff, aggravating the natural terrors of his speech, broke from each majestic nostril, darkening the air. He took it, not by pinches, 30 but a palmful at once, diving for it under the mighty flaps of his old-fashioned waistcoat pocket; his waistcoat red and angry, his coat dark rappee, tinctured by dye original, and by adjuncts, with buttons of obsolete gold. And so he paced the terrace.

By his side a milder form was sometimes to be seen ; the pensive gentility of Samuel Salt. They were coevals, and had nothing but that and their benchership in common. In politics Salt was a Whig, and Coventry a staunch Tory. Many a 5 sarcastic growl did the latter cast out — for Coventry had a rough spinous humour — at the political confederates of his associate, which rebounded from the gentle bosom of the latter like cannon-balls from wool. You could not ruffle Samuel Salt.

S. had the reputation of being a very clever man, and of 10 excellent discernment in the chamber practice of the law. I suspect his knowledge did not amount to much. When a case of difficult disposition of money, testamentary or otherwise, came before him, he ordinarily handed it over with a few instructions to his man Lovel, who was a quick little fellow, 15 and would despatch it out of hand by the light of natural understanding, of which he had an uncommon share. It was incredible what repute for talents S. enjoyed by the mere trick of gravity. He was a shy man ; a child might pose him in a minute — indolent and procrastinating to the last degree. Yet 20 men would give him credit for vast application in spite of himself. He was not to be trusted with himself with impunity. He never dressed for a dinner-party but he forgot his sword — they wore swords then — or some other necessary part of his equipage. Lovel had his eye upon him on all these occasions, and ordinarily gave him his cue. If there was anything 25 which he could speak unseasonably, he was sure to do it. — He was to dine at a relative's of the unfortunate Miss Blandy on the day of her execution ; and L., who had a wary foresight of his probable hallucinations, before he set out, schooled 30 him with great anxiety not in any possible manner to allude to her story that day. S. promised faithfully to observe the injunction. He had not been seated in the parlour, where the company was expecting the dinner summons, four minutes, when, a pause in the conversation ensuing, he got up,

looked out of window, and pulling down his ruffles — an ordinary motion with him — observed, “it was a gloomy day,” and added, “Miss Blandy must be hanged by this time, I suppose.” Instances of this sort were perpetual. Yet S. was thought by some of the greatest men of his time a fit person 5 to be consulted, not alone in matters pertaining to the law, but in the ordinary niceties and embarrassments of conduct — from force of manner entirely. He never laughed. He had the same good fortune among the female world, — was a known toast with the ladies, and one or two are said to have 10 died for love of him — I suppose, because he never trifled or talked gallantry with them, or paid them, indeed, hardly common attentions. He had a fine face and person, but wanted, methought, the spirit that should have shown them off with advantage to the women. His eye lacked lustre. — Not so, 15 thought Susan P—— ; who, at the advanced age of sixty, was seen, in the cold evening time, unaccompanied, wetting the pavement of B——d Row with tears that fell in drops which might be heard, because her friend had died that day — he, whom she had pursued with a hopeless passion for the last 20 forty years — a passion which years could not extinguish or abate ; nor the long resolved, yet gently enforced, puttings off of unrelenting bachelorhood dissuade from its cherished purpose. Mild Susan P——, thou hast now thy friend in heaven ! 25

Thomas Coventry was a cadet of the noble family of that name. He passed his youth in contracted circumstances, which gave him early those parsimonious habits which in after-life never forsook him ; so that, with one windfall or another, about the time I knew him he was master of four or five hundred thousand pounds ; nor did he look, or walk, worth a moi-dore less. He lived in a gloomy house opposite the pump in Serjeants’ Inn, Fleet Street. J., the counsel, is doing self-imposed penance in it, for what reason I divine not, at this 30

day. C. had an agreeable seat at North Cray, where he seldom spent above a day or two at a time in the summer; but preferred, during the hot months, standing at his window in this damp, close, well-like mansion, to watch, as he said, “the 5 maids drawing water all day long.” I suspect he had his within-door reasons for the preference. *Hic currus et arma fuere.* He might think his treasures more safe. His house had the aspect of a strong box. C. was a close hunk — a hoarder rather than a miser — or, if a miser, none of the mad 10 Elwes breed, who have brought discredit upon a character, which cannot exist without certain admirable points of steadiness and unity of purpose. One may hate a true miser, but cannot, I suspect, so easily despise him. By taking care of the pence, he is often enabled to part with the pounds, upon 15 a scale that leaves us careless generous fellows halting at an immeasurable distance behind. C. gave away thirty thousand pounds at once in his lifetime to a blind charity. His house-keeping was severely looked after, but he kept the table of a gentleman. He would know who came in and who went out 20 of his house, but his kitchen chimney was never suffered to freeze.

Salt was his opposite in this, as in all — never knew what he was worth in the world; and having but a competency for his rank, which his indolent habits were little calculated to 25 improve, might have suffered severely if he had not had honest people about him. Lovel took care of everything. He was at once his clerk, his good servant, his dresser, his friend, his “flapper,” his guide, stop-watch, auditor, treasurer. He did nothing without consulting Lovel, or failed in anything 30 without expecting and fearing his admonishing. He put himself almost too much in his hands, had they not been the purest in the world. He resigned his title almost to respect as a master, if L. could ever have forgotten for a moment that he was a servant.

I knew this Lovel. He was a man of an incorrigible and losing honesty. A good fellow withal, and "would strike." In the cause of the oppressed he never considered inequalities, or calculated the number of his opponents. He once wrested a sword out of the hand of a man of quality that had drawn upon him; and pommelled him severely with the hilt of it. The swordsman had offered insult to a female—an occasion upon which no odds against him could have prevented the interference of Lovel. He would stand next day bare-headed to the same person, modestly to excuse his interference—for L. never forgot rank, where something better was not concerned. L. was the liveliest little fellow breathing, had a face as gay as Garrick's, whom he was said greatly to resemble (I have a portrait of him which confirms it), possessed a fine turn for humorous poetry—next to Swift and Prior—moulded heads in clay or plaster of Paris to admiration, by the dint of natural genius merely; turned cribbage-boards, and such small cabinet toys, to perfection; took a hand at quadrille or bowls with equal facility; made punch better than any man of his degree in England; had the merriest quips and conceits, and was altogether as brimful of rogueries and inventions as you could desire. He was a brother of the angle, moreover, and just such a free, hearty, honest companion as Mr. Izaak Walton would have chosen to go a-fishing with. I saw him in his old age and the decay of his faculties, palsy-smitten, in the last sad stage of human weakness—"a remnant most forlorn of what he was,"—yet even then his eye would light up upon the mention of his favourite Garrick. He was greatest, he would say, in Bayes—"was upon the stage nearly throughout the whole performance, and as busy as a bee." At intervals, too, he would speak of his former life, and how he came up a little boy from Lincoln to go to service, and how his mother cried at parting with him, and how he returned, after some few years' absence, in his

smart new livery to see her, and she blessed herself at the change, and could hardly be brought to believe that it was “her own bairn.” And then, the excitement subsiding, he would weep, till I have wished that sad second-childhood might have a 5 mother still to lay its head upon her lap. But the common mother of us all in no long time after received him gently into hers.

With Coventry, and with Salt, in their walks upon the terrace, most commonly Peter Pierson would join, to make up a third. 10 They did not walk linked arm in arm in those days — “as now our stout triumvirs sweep the streets,” — but generally with both hands folded behind them for state, or with one at least behind, the other carrying a cane. P. was a benevolent, but not a prepossessing man. He had that in his face which you 15 could not term unhappiness ; it rather implied an incapacity of being happy. His cheeks were colourless, even to whiteness. His look was uninviting, resembling (but without his sourness) that of our great philanthropist. I know that he *did* good acts, but I could never make out what he *was*. Con-20 temporary with these, but subordinate, was Daines Barrington — another oddity — he walked burly and square — in imitation, I think, of Coventry — howbeit he attained not to the dignity of his prototype. Nevertheless, he did pretty well, upon the strength of being a tolerable antiquarian, and hav-25 ing a brother a bishop. When the account of his year’s treasurership came to be audited, the following singular charge was unanimously disallowed by the bench : “Item, disbursed Mr. Allen, the gardener, twenty shillings, for stuff to poison the sparrows by my orders.” Next to him was old Barton — a 30 jolly negation, who took upon him the ordering of the bills of fare for the parliament chamber, where the benchers dine — answering to the combination rooms at college — much to the easement of his less epicurean brethren. I know nothing more of him. — Then Read, and Twopeny — Read, good-humoured

and personable — Twopeny, good-humoured, but thin, and felicitous in jests upon his own figure. If T. was thin, Wharry was attenuated and fleeting. Many must remember him (for he was rather of later date) and his singular gait, which was performed by three steps and a jump regularly succeeding. 5 The steps were little efforts, like that of a child beginning to walk ; the jump comparatively vigorous, as a foot to an inch. Where he learned this figure, or what occasioned it, I could never discover. It was neither graceful in itself, nor seemed to answer the purpose any better than common walking. The 10 extreme tenuity of his frame, I suspect, set him upon it. It was a trial of poising. Twopeny would often rally him upon his leanness, and hail him as Brother Lusty ; but W. had no relish of a joke. His features were spiteful. I have heard that he would pinch his cat's ears extremely, when anything 15 had offended him. Jackson — omniscient Jackson he was called — was of this period. He had the reputation of possessing more multifarious knowledge than any man of his time. He was the Friar Bacon of the less literate portion of the Temple. I remember a pleasant passage, of the cook apply- 20 ing to him, with much formality of apology, for instructions how to write down *edge* bone of beef in his bill of commons. He was supposed to know, if any man in the world did. He decided the orthography to be — as I have given it — fortifying his authority with such anatomical reasons as dismissed 25 the manciple (for the time) learned and happy. Some do spell it yet perversely, *atch* bone, from a fanciful resemblance between its shape, and that of the aspirate so denominated. I had almost forgotten Mingay with the iron hand — but he was somewhat later. He had lost his right hand by some 30 accident, and supplied it with a grappling hook, which he wielded with a tolerable adroitness. I detected the substitute, before I was old enough to reason whether it were artificial or not. I remember the astonishment it raised in me. He

was a blustering, loud-talking person ; and I reconciled the phenomenon to my ideas as an emblem of power — somewhat like the horns in the forehead of Michael Angelo's Moses. Baron Maseres, who walks (or did till very lately) in the costume of the reign of George the Second, closes my imperfect recollections of the old benchers of the Inner Temple.

Fantastic forms, whither are ye fled ? Or, if the like of you exist, why exist they no more for me ? Ye inexplicable, half-understood appearances, why comes in reason to tear away

10 the preternatural mist, bright or gloomy, that enshrouded you ?

Why make ye so sorry a figure in my relation, who made up to me — to my childish eyes — the mythology of the Temple ?

In those days I saw Gods, as "old men covered with a mantle," walking upon the earth. Let the dreams of classic idolatry

15 perish, — extinct be the fairies and fairy trumpery of legendary fabling, — in the heart of childhood, there will, for ever, spring up a well of innocent or wholesome superstition — the

seeds of exaggeration will be busy there, and vital — from every-day forms educating the unknown and the uncommon. In that

20 little Goshen there will be light, when the grown world flounders about in the darkness of sense and materiality. While

childhood, and while dreams, reducing childhood, shall be left, imagination shall not have spread her holy wings totally to fly the earth.

25 P.S. — I have done injustice to the soft shade of Samuel Salt.

See what it is to trust to imperfect memory, and the erring notices of childhood ! Yet I protest I always thought that he

had been a bachelor ! This gentleman, R. N. informs me, married young, and losing his lady in child-bed, within the first

30 year of their union, fell into a deep melancholy, from the effects of which, probably, he never thoroughly recovered. In what a new light does this place his rejection (O call it by a gentler name !) of mild Susan P——, unravelling into beauty certain

peculiarities of this very shy and retiring character ! — Henceforth let no one receive the narratives of Elia for true records ! They are, in truth, but shadows of fact — verisimilitudes, not verities — or sitting but upon the remote edges and outskirts of history. He is no such honest chronicler as R. N., and would 5 have done better perhaps to have consulted that gentleman, before he sent these incondite reminiscences to press. But the worthy sub-treasurer — who respects his old and his new masters — would but have been puzzled at the indecorous liberties of Elia. The good man wots not, peradventure, of the 10 licence which *Magazines* have arrived at in this plain-speaking age, or hardly dreams of their existence beyond the *Gentleman's* — his furthest monthly excursions in this nature having been long confined to the holy ground of honest *Urban's* obituary. May it be long before his own name shall help to swell 15 those columns of unenvied flattery ! — Meantime, O ye New Benchers of the Inner Temple, cherish him kindly, for he is himself the kindliest of human creatures. Should infirmities overtake him — he is yet in green and vigorous senility — make allowances for them, remembering that “ye yourselves 20 are old.” So may the Winged Horse, your ancient badge and cognizance, still flourish ! so may future Hookers and Seldens illustrate your church and chambers ! so may the sparrows, in default of more melodious quiristers, unpoisoned hop about your walks ! so may the fresh-coloured and cleanly nursery- 25 maid, who, by leave, airs her playful charge in your stately gardens, drop her prettiest blushing curtsey as ye pass, reductive of juvenescent emotion ! so may the younkers of this generation eye you, pacing your stately terrace, with the same superstitious veneration, with which the child Elia gazed 30 on the Old Worthies that solemnized the parade before ye !

XIV. WITCHES AND OTHER NIGHT-FEARS.

WE are too hasty when we set down our ancestors in the gross for fools, for the monstrous inconsistencies (as they seem to us) involved in their creed of witchcraft. In the relations of this visible world we find them to have been as rational, and shrewd 5 to detect an historic anomaly, as ourselves. But when once the invisible world was supposed to be opened, and the lawless agency of bad spirits assumed, what measures of probability, of decency, of fitness, or proportion — of that which distinguishes the likely from the palpable absurd — could they have to guide 10 them in the rejection or admission of any particular testimony?

— That maidens pined away, wasting inwardly as their waxen images consumed before a fire — that corn was lodged, and cattle lamed — that whirlwinds uptore in diabolic revelry the oaks of the forest — or that spits and kettles only danced a 15 fearful-innocent vagary about some rustic's kitchen when no wind was stirring — were all equally probable where no law of agency was understood. That the prince of the powers of darkness, passing by the flower and pomp of the earth, should lay preposterous siege to the weak fantasy of indigent eld — has 20 neither likelihood nor unlikelihood *à priori* to us, who have no measure to guess at his policy, or standard to estimate what rate those anile souls may fetch in the devil's market. Nor, when the wicked are expressly symbolized by a goat, 25 sometimes in that body, and assert his metaphor. — That the intercourse was opened at all between both worlds was perhaps the mistake — but that once assumed, I see no reason for disbelieving one attested story of this nature more than another on the score of absurdity. There is no law 30 to judge of the lawless, or canon by which a dream may be criticized.

I have sometimes thought that I could not have existed in the days of received witchcraft; that I could not have slept in a village where one of those reputed hags dwelt. Our ancestors were bolder or more obtuse. Amidst the universal belief that these wretches were in league with the author of all evil, holding hell tributary to their muttering, no simple Justice of the Peace seems to have scrupled issuing, or silly Headborough serving, a warrant upon them — as if they should subpoena Satan! — Prospero in his boat, with his books and wand about him, suffers himself to be conveyed away at the 10 mercy of his enemies to an unknown island. He might have raised a storm or two, we think, on the passage. His acquiescence is an exact analogy to the non-resistance of witches to the constituted powers. — What stops the Fiend in Spenser from tearing Guyon to pieces — or who had made it a condition of his prey, that Guyon must take assay of the glorious bait — we have no guess. We do not know the laws of that country. 15

From my childhood I was extremely inquisitive about witches and witch-stories. My maid, and more legendary aunt, supplied me with good store. But I shall mention the accident which directed my curiosity originally into this channel. In my father's book-closet, the History of the Bible, by Stackhouse, occupied a distinguished station. The pictures with which it abounds — one of the ark, in particular, and another 20 of Solomon's temple, delineated with all the fidelity of ocular admeasurement, as if the artist had been upon the spot — attracted my childish attention. There was a picture, too, of the Witch raising up Samuel, which I wish that I had never seen. We shall come to that hereafter. Stackhouse is in two 25 huge tomes — and there was a pleasure in removing folios of that magnitude, which, with infinite straining, was as much as I could manage from the situation which they occupied upon an upper shelf. I have not met with the work from that time

to this, but I remember it consisted of Old Testament stories, orderly set down, with the *objection* appended to each story, and the *solution* of the objection regularly tacked to that. The *objection* was a summary of whatever difficulties had been 5 opposed to the credibility of the history, by the shrewdness of ancient or modern infidelity, drawn up with an almost complimentary excess of candour. The *solution* was brief, modest, and satisfactory. The bane and antidote were both before you. To doubts so put, and so quashed, there seemed to be 10 an end for ever. The dragon lay dead, for the foot of the veriest babe to trample on. But — like as was rather feared than realized from that slain monster in Spenser — from the womb of those crushed errors young dragonets would creep, exceeding the prowess of so tender a Saint George as myself 15 to vanquish. The habit of expecting objections to every passage, set me upon starting more objections, for the glory of finding a solution of my own for them. I became staggered and perplexed, a sceptic in long-coats. The pretty Bible stories which I had read, or heard read in church, lost their 20 purity and sincerity of impression, and were turned into so many historic or chronologic theses to be defended against whatever impugners. I was not to disbelieve them, but — the next thing to that — I was to be quite sure that some one or other would or had disbelieved them. Next to making 25 a child an infidel, is the letting him know that there are infidels at all. Credulity is the man's weakness, but the child's strength. O, how ugly sound scriptural doubts from the mouth of a babe and a suckling! — I should have lost myself in these mazes, and have pined away, I think, with such unfit sustenance 30 as these husks afforded, but for a fortunate piece of ill-fortune, which about this time befell me. Turning over the picture of the ark with too much haste, I unhappily made a breach in its ingenious fabric — driving my inconsiderate fingers right through the two larger quadrupeds — the elephant and the

camel — that stare (as well they might) out of the two last windows next the steerage in that unique piece of naval architecture. Stackhouse was henceforth locked up, and became an interdicted treasure. With the book, the *objections* and *solutions* gradually cleared out of my head, and have seldom 5 returned since in any force to trouble me. — But there was one impression which I had imbibed from Stackhouse, which no lock or bar could shut out, and which was destined to try my childish nerves rather more seriously. — That detestable picture !

10

I was dreadfully alive to nervous terrors. The night-time solitude, and the dark, were my hell. The sufferings I endured in this nature would justify the expression. I never laid my head on my pillow, I suppose, from the fourth to the seventh or eighth year of my life — so far as memory serves in things so 15 long ago — without an assurance, which realized its own prophecy, of seeing some frightful spectre. Be old Stackhouse then acquitted in part, if I say, that to his picture of the Witch raising up Samuel — (O that old man covered with a mantle !) I owe — not my midnight terrors, the hell of my infancy — but 20 the shape and manner of their visitation. It was he who dressed up for me a hag that nightly sate upon my pillow — a sure bedfellow, when my aunt or my maid was far from me. All day long, while the book was permitted me, I dreamed waking over his delineation, and at night (if I may use so bold an expres- 25 sion) awoke into sleep, and found the vision true. I durst not, even in the daylight, once enter the chamber where I slept, without my face turned to the window, aversely from the bed where my witch-ridden pillow was. — Parents do not know what they do when they leave tender babes alone to go to sleep in 30 the dark. The feeling about for a friendly arm — the hoping for a familiar voice — when they wake screaming — and find none to soothe them — what a terrible shaking it is to their poor nerves ! The keeping them up till midnight, through

candle-light and the unwholesome hours, as they are called, — would, I am satisfied, in a medical point of view, prove the better caution. — That detestable picture, as I have said, gave the fashion to my dreams — if dreams they were — for the scene 5 of them was invariably the room in which I lay. Had I never met with the picture, the fears would have come self-pictured in some shape or other —

Headless bear, blackman, or ape,

but, as it was, my imaginations took that form. — It is not 10 book, or picture, or the stories of foolish servants, which create these terrors in children. They can at most but give them a direction. Dear little T. H., who of all children has been brought up with the most scrupulous exclusion of every taint 15 of superstition — who was never allowed to hear of goblin or apparition, or scarcely to be told of bad men, or to read or hear of any distressing story — finds all this world of fear, from which he has been so rigidly excluded *ab extra*, in his own “ thick-coming fancies ; ” and from his little midnight pillow, this nurse-child of optimism will start at shapes, unborrowed of tradition, 20 in sweats to which the reveries of the cell-damned murderer are tranquillity.

Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire — stories of Celæno and the Harpies — may reproduce themselves in the brain of superstition — but they were there before. They are 25 transcripts, types — the archetypes are in us, and eternal. How else should the recital of that, which we know in a waking sense to be false, come to affect us at all? — or

— Names, whose sense we see not,
Fray us with things that be not?

30 Is it that we naturally conceive terror from such objects, considered in their capacity of being able to inflict upon us bodily injury? — O, least of all ! These terrors are of older

standing. They date beyond body — or, without the body, they would have been the same. All the cruel, tormenting, defined devils in Dante — tearing, mangling, choking, stifling, scorching demons — are they one-half so fearful to the spirit of a man, as the simple idea of a spirit unembodied following him — 5

Like one that on a lonesome road
 Doth walk in fear and dread,
 And having once turn'd round, walks on,
 And turns no more his head ;
 Because he knows a frightful fiend
 Doth close behind him tread.¹ 10

That the kind of fear here treated of is purely spiritual — that it is strong in proportion as it is objectless upon earth — that it predominates in the period of sinless infancy — are difficulties, the solution of which might afford some probable 15 insight into our ante-mundane condition, and a peep at least into the shadow-land of pre-existence.

My night fancies have long ceased to be afflictive. I confess an occasional nightmare ; but I do not, as in early youth, keep a stud of them. Fiendish faces, with the extinguished taper, 20 will come and look at me ; but I know them for mockeries, even while I cannot elude their presence, and I fight and grapple with them. For the credit of my imagination, I am almost ashamed to say how tame and prosaic my dreams are grown. They are never romantic, seldom even rural. They are of 25 architecture and of buildings — cities abroad, which I have never seen, and hardly have hope to see. I have traversed, for the seeming length of a natural day, Rome, Amsterdam, Paris, Lisbon — their churches, palaces, squares, market-places, shops, suburbs, ruins, with an inexpressible sense of delight — 30 a map-like distinctness of trace — and a daylight vividness of vision, that was all but being awake. — I have formerly travelled

¹ Mr. Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*.

among the Westmoreland fells — my highest Alps, — but they are objects too mighty for the grasp of my dreaming recognition ; and I have again and again awoke with ineffectual struggles of the inner eye, to make out a shape, in any way whatever, 5 of Helvellyn. Methought I was in that country, but the mountains were gone. The poverty of my dreams mortifies me. There is Coleridge, at his will can conjure up icy domes, and pleasure-houses for Kubla Khan, and Abyssinian maids, and songs of Abara, and caverns.

10 Where Alph, the sacred river, runs.

to solace his night solitudes — when I cannot muster a fiddle. Barry Cornwall has his tritons and his nereids gambolling before him in nocturnal visions, and proclaiming sons born to Neptune — when my stretch of imaginative activity can hardly, in the 15 night season, raise up the ghost of a fish-wife. To set my failures in somewhat a mortifying light — it was after reading the noble Dream of this poet, that my fancy ran strong upon these marine spectra ; and the poor plastic power, such as it is, within me set to work, to humour my folly in a sort of dream that very 20 night. Methought I was upon the ocean billows at some sea nuptials, riding and mounted high, with the customary train sounding their conchs before me (I myself, you may be sure, the *leading god*), and jollily we went careering over the main, till just where Ino Leucothea should have greeted me (I think 25 it was Ino) with a white embrace, the billows gradually subsiding, fell from a sea-roughness to a sea-calm, and thence to a river-motion, and that river (as happens in the familiarization of dreams) was no other than the gentle Thames, which landed me, in the wafture of a placid wave or two, alone, safe and 30 inglorious, somewhere at the foot of Lambeth Palace.

The degree of the soul's creativeness in sleep might furnish no whimsical criterion of the quantum of poetical faculty resident in the same soul waking. An old gentleman, a friend of

mine, and a humourist, used to carry this notion so far, that when he saw any stripling of his acquaintance ambitious of becoming a poet, his first question would be, — “Young man, what sort of dreams have you?” I have so much faith in my old friend’s theory, that when I feel that idle vein returning 5 upon me, I presently subside into my proper element of prose, remembering those eluding nereids, and that inauspicious inland landing.

XV. GRACE BEFORE MEAT

THE custom of saying grace at meals had, probably, its origin in the early times of the world, and the hunter-state of man, 10 when dinners were precarious things, and a full meal was something more than a common blessing; when a bellyful was a windfall, and looked like a special providence. In the shouts and triumphal songs with which, after a season of sharp abstinence, a lucky booty of deer’s or goat’s flesh would naturally 15 be ushered home, existed, perhaps, the germ of the modern grace. It is not otherwise easy to be understood, why the blessing of food — the act of eating — should have had a particular expression of thanksgiving annexed to it, distinct from that implied and silent gratitude with which we are expected 20 to enter upon the enjoyment of the many other various gifts and good things of existence.

I own that I am disposed to say grace upon twenty other occasions in the course of the day besides my dinner. I want a form for setting out upon a pleasant walk, for a moonlight 25 ramble, for a friendly meeting, or a solved problem. Why have we none for books, those spiritual repasts — a grace before Milton — a grace before Shakespeare — a devotional exercise proper to be said before reading the *Faërie Queene*? — but, the received ritual having prescribed these forms to the solitary 30 ceremony of manducation, I shall confine my observations to

the experience which I have had of the grace, properly so called ; commanding my new scheme for extension to a niche in the grand philosophical, poetical, and perchance in part heretical, liturgy, now compiling by my friend Homo Humanus, 5 for the use of a certain snug congregation of Utopian Rabellesian Christians, no matter where assembled.

The form then of the benediction before eating has its beauty at a poor man's table, or at the simple and unprovocative repast of children. It is here that the grace becomes 10 exceedingly graceful. The indigent man, who hardly knows whether he shall have a meal the next day or not, sits down to his fare with a present sense of the blessing, which can be but feebly acted by the rich, into whose minds the conception of wanting a dinner could never, but by some extreme theory, 15 have entered. The proper end of food — the animal sustenance — is barely contemplated by them. The poor man's bread is his daily bread, literally his bread for the day. Their courses are perennial.

Again, the plainest diet seems the fittest to be preceded by 20 the grace. That which is least stimulative to appetite, leaves the mind most free for foreign considerations. A man may feel thankful, heartily thankful, over a dish of plain mutton with turnips, and have leisure to reflect upon the ordinance and institution of eating ; when he shall confess a perturbation 25 of mind, inconsistent with the purposes of the grace, at the presence of venison or turtle. When I have sate (a *rarus hospes*) at rich men's tables, with the savoury soup and messes steaming up the nostrils, and moistening the lips of the guests with desire and a distracted choice, I have felt the introduction 30 of that ceremony to be unseasonable. With the ravenous orgasm upon you, it seems impertinent to interpose a religious sentiment. It is a confusion of purpose to mutter out praises from a mouth that waters. The heats of epicurism put out the gentle flame of devotion. The incense which rises round

is pagan, and the belly-god intercepts it for his own. The very excess of the provision beyond the needs, takes away all sense of proportion between the end and means. The giver is veiled by his gifts. You are startled at the injustice of returning thanks — for what? — for having too much, while 5 so many starve. It is to praise the Gods amiss.

I have observed this awkwardness felt, scarce consciously perhaps, by the good man who says the grace. I have seen it in clergymen and others — a sort of shame — a sense of the co-presence of circumstances which unhallow the blessing. 10 After a devotional tone put on for a few seconds, how rapidly the speaker will fall into his common voice, helping himself or his neighbour, as if to get rid of some uneasy sensation of hypocrisy. Not that the good man was a hypocrite, or was not most conscientious in the discharge of the duty ; but he 15 felt in his inmost mind the incompatibility of the scene and the viands before him with the exercise of a calm and rational gratitude.

I hear somebody exclaim, — Would you have Christians sit down at table, like hogs to their troughs, without remembering 20 the Giver? — no — I would have them sit down as Christians, remembering the Giver, and less like hogs. Or if their appetites must run riot, and they must pamper themselves with delicacies for which east and west are ransacked, I would have them postpone their benediction to a fitter season, when appet- 25 tite is laid ; when the still small voice can be heard, and the reason of the grace returns — with temperate diet and restricted dishes. Gluttony and surfeiting are no proper occasions for thanksgiving. When Jeshurun waxed fat, we read that he kicked. Virgil knew the harpy-nature better, when he put 30 into the mouth of Celæno anything but a blessing. We may be gratefully sensible of the deliciousness of some kinds of food beyond others, though that is a meaner and inferior gratitude : but the proper object of the grace is sustenance, not relishes ;

daily bread, not delicacies ; the means of life, and not the means of pampering the carcass. With what frame or composure, I wonder, can a city chaplain pronounce his benediction at some great Hall feast, when he knows that his last concluding
 5 pious word — and that in all probability, the sacred name which he preaches — is but the signal for so many impatient harpies to commence their foul orgies, with as little sense of true thankfulness (which is temperance) as those Virgilian fowl ! It is well if the good man himself does not feel his
 10 devotions a little clouded, those foggy sensuous steams mingling with and polluting the pure altar sacrifice.

The severest satire upon full tables and surfeits is the banquet which Satan, in the *Paradise Regained*, provides for a temptation in the wilderness :

15 A table richly spread in regal mode,
 With dishes piled, and meats of noblest sort
 And savour ; beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
 In pastry built, or from the spit, or boil'd
 Gris-amber-steam'd ; all fish from sea or shore,
 20 Freshet or purling brook, for which was drain'd
 Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.

The tempter, I warrant you, thought these cates would go down without the commendatory preface of a benediction. They are like to be short graces where the devil plays the
 25 host. — I am afraid the poet wants his usual decorum in this place. Was he thinking of the old Roman luxury, or of a gaudy day at Cambridge ? This was a temptation fitter for a Heliogabalus. The whole banquet is too civic and culinary, and the accompaniments altogether a profanation of that deep,
 30 abstracted, holy scene. The mighty artillery of sauces, which the cook-fiend conjures up, is out of proportion to the simple wants and plain hunger of the guest. He that disturbed him in his dreams, from his dreams might have been taught better.

To the temperate fantasies of the famished Son of God, what sort of feasts presented themselves? — He dreamed indeed,

As appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet.

But what meats?

5

Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing even and morn;
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought:
He saw the prophet also how he fled
10
Into the desert, and how there he slept
Under a juniper; then how awaked
He found his supper on the coals prepared,
And by the angel was bid rise and eat,
And ate the second time after repose,
15
The strength whereof sufficed him forty days:
Sometimes, that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

10

15

Nothing in Milton is finelier fancied than these temperate dreams of the divine Hungerer. To which of these two vis- 20
ionary banquets, think you, would the introduction of what is called the grace have been most fitting and pertinent.

Theoretically I am no enemy to graces; but practically I own that (before meat especially) they seem to involve something awkward and unseasonable. Our appetites, of one or 25 another kind, are excellent spurs to our reason, which might otherwise but feebly set about the great ends of preserving and continuing the species. They are fit blessings to be contemplated at a distance with a becoming gratitude; but the moment of appetite (the judicious reader will apprehend 30 me) is, perhaps, the least fit season for that exercise. The Quakers who go about their business, of every description, with more calmness than we, have more title to the use of these

benedictory prefaces. I have always admired their silent grace, and the more because I have observed their applications to the meat and drink following to be less passionate and sensual than ours. They are neither gluttons nor wine-bibbers as a 5 people. They eat, as a horse bolts his chopped hay, with indifference, calmness, and cleanly circumstances. They neither grease nor slop themselves. When I see a citizen in his bib and tucker, I cannot imagine it a surplice.

I am no Quaker at my food. I confess I am not indifferent to the kinds of it. Those unctuous morsels of deer's flesh were not made to be received with dispassionate services. I hate a man who swallows it, affecting not to know what he is eating. I suspect his taste in higher matters. I shrink instinctively from one who professes to like minced veal. There is a 15 physiognomical character in the tastes for food. C—— holds that a man cannot have a pure mind who refuses apple-dumplings. I am not certain but he is right. With the decay of my first innocence, I confess a less and less relish daily for those innocuous cates. The whole vegetable tribe have lost 20 their gust with me. Only I stick to asparagus, which still seems to inspire gentle thoughts. I am impatient and querulous under culinary disappointments, as to come home at the dinner-hour, for instance, expecting some savoury mess, and to find one quite tasteless and sapidless. Butter ill melted — that com- 25 monest of kitchen failures — puts me beside my tenour. — The author of the Rambler used to make inarticulate animal noises over a favourite food. Was this the music quite proper to be preceded by the grace? or would the pious man have done better to postpone his devotions to a season when the blessing 30 might be contemplated with less perturbation? I quarrel with no man's tastes, nor would set my thin face against those excellent things, in their way, jollity and feasting. But as these exercises, however laudable, have little in them of grace or gracefulness, a man should be sure, before he ventures so to

grace them, that while he is pretending his devotions other-
where, he is not secretly kissing his hand to some great fish —
his Dagon — with a special consecration of no ark but the fat
tureen before him. Graces are the sweet preluding strains to
the banquets of angels and children ; to the roots and severer 5
repasts of the Chartreuse ; to the slender, but not slenderly
acknowledged, refection of the poor and humble man : but at
the heaped-up boards of the pampered and the luxurious they
become of dissonant mood, less timed and tuned to the occa-
sion, methinks, than the noise of those better befitting organs 10
would be, which children hear tales of at Hog's Norton. We
sit too long at our meals, or are too curious in the study of them,
or too disordered in our application to them, or engross too
great a portion of those good things (which should be com-
mon) to our share, to be able with any grace to say grace. 15
To be thankful for what we grasp exceeding our proportion is
to add hypocrisy to injustice. A lurking sense of this truth is
what makes the performance of this duty so cold and spiritless
a service at most tables. In houses where the grace is as
indispensable as the napkin, who has not seen that never-settled 20
question arise, as to *who shall say it* ; while the good man of
the house and the visitor clergyman, or some other guest belike
of next authority from years or gravity, shall be bandying about
the office between them as a matter of compliment, each of
them not unwilling to shift the awkward burthen of an equivocal 25
duty from his own shoulders ?

I once drank tea in company with two Methodist divines
of different persuasions, whom it was my fortune to introduce
to each other for the first time that evening. Before the first
cup was handed round, one of these reverend gentlemen put 30
it to the other, with all due solemnity, whether he chose to *say*
anything. It seems it is the custom with some sectaries to put
up a short prayer before this meal also. His reverend brother
did not at first quite apprehend him, but upon an explanation,

with little less importance he made answer, that it was not a custom known in his church: in which courteous evasion the other acquiescing for good manners' sake, or in compliance with a weak brother, the supplementary or tea-grace was waived 5 altogether. With what spirit might not Lucian have painted two priests, of *his* religion, playing into each other's hands the compliment of performing or omitting a sacrifice,—the hungry God meantime, doubtful of his incense, with expectant nostrils hovering over the two flamens, and (as between two stools) 10 going away in the end without his supper.

A short form upon these occasions is felt to want reverence; a long one, I am afraid, cannot escape the charge of impertinence. I do not quite approve of the epigrammatic conciseness with which that equivocal wag (but my pleasant 15 school-fellow) C. V. L., when importuned for a grace, used to inquire, first slyly leering down the table, "Is there no clergyman here?"—significantly adding, "Thank G—." Nor do I think our old form at school quite pertinent, where we were used to preface our bald bread and cheese suppers with a 20 preamble connecting with that humble blessing a recognition of benefits the most awful and overwhelming to the imagination which religion has to offer. *Non tunc illis erat locus.* I remember we were put to it to reconcile the phrase "good creatures," upon which the blessing rested, with the fare set 25 before us, wilfully understanding that expression in a low and animal sense,—till some one recalled a legend, which told how in the golden days of Christ's, the young Hospitallers were wont to have smoking joints of roast meat upon their nightly boards, till some pious benefactor, commiserating the 30 decencies, rather than the palates, of the children, commuted our flesh for garments, and gave us—*horresco referens*—trousers instead of mutton.

XVI. DREAM-CHILDREN: A REVERIE

CHILDREN love to listen to stories about their elders, when *they* were children: to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle, or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother 5 Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene — so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country — of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the 10 Wood. Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts, till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no 15 story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by everybody, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the 20 charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept 25 up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen 30 lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt

drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish, indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighbourhood 5 for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman ; so good indeed that she knew all the Psaltery by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person 10 their great-grandmother Field once was : and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer — here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till upon my looking grave, it desisted — the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called cancer, came, and bowed her down with 15 pain ; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house ; and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight 20 gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm ;" and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she — and yet I never saw the infants. Here John 25 expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grandchildren, having us to the great house in the holidays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the twelve Cæsars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the 30 old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them ; how I could never be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out — sometimes in the

spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me — and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then, — and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew-trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir apples, which were good for nothing but to look at — or in lying about upon the fresh grass, with all the fine garden smells around me — or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth — or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings, — I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavours of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L —, because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us ; and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out — and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries — and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their

great-grandmother Field most especially ; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy — for he was a good bit older than me — many a mile when I could not walk for pain ; — and how in after-life he became lame-
5 footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowance enough for him when he was impatient, and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed ; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a
10 distance there is betwixt life and death ; and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me ; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much
15 I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarrelling with him (for we quarrelled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he, their poor uncle, must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here
20 the children fell a-crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes
25 in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W——n ; and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens — when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment,
30 that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was ; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely

impressed upon me the effects of speech : "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing ; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages, before we have existence, and a name "— and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor arm-chair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side — but John L. (or James Elia) was gone forever. 5

XVII. ON SOME OF THE OLD ACTORS

THE casual sight of an old Play Bill, which I picked up the 10 other day — I know not by what chance it was preserved so long — tempts me to call to mind a few of the Players, who make the principal figure in it. It presents the cast of parts in the Twelfth Night at the old Drury Lane Theatre two-and-thirty years ago. There is something very touching in these 15 old remembrances. They make us think how we *once* used to read a Play Bill — not, as now peradventure, singling out a favourite performer, and casting a negligent eye over the rest ; but spelling out every name, down to the very mutes and servants of the scene : — when it was a matter of no small 20 moment to us whether Whitfield, or Packer, took the part of Fabian ; when Benson and Burton and Phillimore — names of small account — had an importance beyond what we can be content to attribute now to the time's best actors. — "Orsino, by Mr. Barrymore." — What a full Shakspearean sound it car- 25 nes ! how fresh to memory arise the image, and the manner, of the gentle actor !

Those who have only seen Mrs. Jordan within the last ten or fifteen years, can have no adequate notion of her performance of such parts as Ophelia ; Helena, in All's Well that Ends 30

Well ; and Viola in this play. Her voice had latterly acquired a coarseness, which suited well enough with her Nells and Hoydens, but in those days it sank, with her steady melting eye, into the heart. Her joyous parts — in which her memory now 5 chiefly lives — in her youth were outdone by her plaintive ones. There is no giving an account how she delivered the disguised story of her love for Orsino. It was no set speech, that she had foreseen, so as to weave it into an harmonious period, line necessarily following line, to make up the music — yet I have 10 heard it so spoken, or rather *read*, not without its grace and beauty — but, when she had declared her sister's history to be a "blank," and that she "never told her love," there was a pause, as if the story had ended — and then the image of the "worm in the bud" came up as a new suggestion — and the 15 heightened image of "Patience" still followed after that, as by some growing (and not mechanical) process, thought springing up after thought, I would almost say, as they were watered by her tears. So in those fine lines —

20 Write loyal cantons of contemned love —
 Halloo your name to the reverberate hills —

there was no preparation made in the foregoing image for that which was to follow. She used no rhetoric in her passion ; or it was nature's own rhetoric, most legitimate then, when it seemed altogether without rule or law.

25 Mrs. Powel (now Mrs. Renard), then in the pride of her beauty, made an admirable Olivia. She was particularly excellent in her unbending scenes in conversation with the Clown. I have seen some Olivias — and those very sensible actresses too — who in these interlocutions have seemed to set their wits 30 at the jester, and to vie conceits with him in downright emulation. But she used him for her sport, like what he was, to trifle a leisure sentence or two with, and then to be dismissed, and she to be the Great Lady still. She touched the imperious

fantastic humour of the character with nicety. Her fine spacious person filled the scene.

The part of Malvolio has in my judgment been so often misunderstood, and the *general merits* of the actor, who then played it, so unduly appreciated, that I shall hope for pardon, 5 if I am a little prolix upon these points.

Of all the actors who flourished in my time — a melancholy phrase if taken aright, reader — Bensley had most of the swell of soul, was greatest in the delivery of heroic conceptions, the emotions consequent upon the presentment of a great idea to 10 the fancy. He had the true poetical enthusiasm — the rarest faculty among players. None that I remember possessed even a portion of that fine madness which he threw out in Hotspur's famous rant about glory, or the transports of the Venetian incendiary at the vision of the fired city.¹ His voice had the 15 dissonance, and at times the inspiriting effect of the trumpet. His gait was uncouth and stiff, but no way embarrassed by affectation ; and the thorough-bred gentleman was uppermost in every movement. He seized the moment of passion with the greatest truth ; like a faithful clock, never striking before 20 the time ; never anticipating or leading you to anticipate. He was totally destitute of trick and artifice. He seemed come upon the stage to do the poet's message simply, and he did it with as genuine fidelity as the nuncios in Homer deliver the errands of the gods. He let the passion or the sentiment 25 do its own work without prop or bolstering. He would have scorned to mountebank it ; and betrayed none of that *cleverness* which is the bane of serious acting. For that reason, his Iago was the only endurable one which I remember to have seen. No spectator from his action could divine more 30

¹How lovely the Adriatic whore
Dress'd in her flames will shine — devouring flames —
Such as will burn her to her wat'ry bottom,
And hiss in her foundation.

Pierre, in *Venice Preserved*.

of his artifice than Othello was supposed to do. His confessions in soliloquy alone put you in possession of the mystery. There were no by-intimations to make the audience fancy their own discernment so much greater than that of the Moor—
5 who commonly stands like a great helpless mark set up for mine Ancient, and a quantity of barren spectators, to shoot their bolts at. The Iago of Bensley did not go to work so grossly. There was a triumphant tone about the character, natural to a general consciousness of power; but none of that
10 petty vanity which chuckles and cannot contain itself upon any little successful stroke of its knavery—as is common with your small villains, and green probationers in mischief. It did not clap or crow before its time. It was not a man setting his wits at a child, and winking all the while at other children
15 who are mightily pleased at being let into the secret; but a consummate villain entrapping a noble nature into toils, against which no discernment was available, where the manner was as fathomless as the purpose seemed dark, and without motive.
The part of Malvolio, in the Twelfth Night, was performed by
20 Bensley, with a richness and a dignity, of which (to judge from some recent castings of that character) the very tradition must be worn out from the stage. No manager in those days would have dreamed of giving it to Mr. Baddeley, or Mr. Parsons: when Bensley was occasionally absent from the theatre, John
25 Kemble thought it no derogation to succeed to the part. Malvolio is not essentially ludicrous. He becomes comic but by accident. He is cold, austere, repelling; but dignified, consistent, and, for what appears, rather of an over-stretched morality. Maria describes him as a sort of Puritan; and he
30 might have worn his gold chain with honour in one of our old roundhead families, in the service of a Lambert, or a Lady Fairfax. But his morality and his manners are misplaced in Illyria. He is opposed to the proper *levities* of the piece, and falls in the unequal contest. Still his pride, or his gravity (call

it which you will), is inherent, and native to the man, not mock or affected, which latter only are fit objects to excite laughter. His quality is at the best unlovely, but neither buffoon nor contemptible. His bearing is lofty, a little above his station, but probably not much above his deserts. We see no reason 5 why he should not have been brave, honourable, accomplished. His careless committal of the ring to the ground (which he was commissioned to restore to Cesario), bespeaks a generosity of birth and feeling.¹ His dialect on all occasions is that of a gentleman and a man of education. We must not confound 10 him with the eternal old, low steward of comedy. He is master of the household to a great Princess; a dignity probably conferred upon him for other respects than age or length of service.² Olivia, at the first indication of his supposed madness, declares that she "would not have him miscarry for half 15 of her dowry." Does this look as if the character was meant to appear little or insignificant? Once, indeed, she accuses him to his face—of what?—of being "sick of self-love,"—but with a gentleness and considerateness which could not have been, if she had not thought that this particular infirmity shaded some virtues. His rebuke to the knight, and his 20 sottish revellers, is sensible and spirited; and when we take into

¹ *Viola.* She took the ring from me, I'll none of it.

Mal. Come, sir, you peevishly threw it to her; and her will is, it should be so returned. If it be worth stooping for, there it lies in your eye; if not, be it his that finds it.—Original footnote.

² Mrs. Inchbald seems to have fallen into the common mistake of the character in some otherwise sensible observations on this comedy. "It might be asked," she says, "whether this credulous steward was much deceived in imputing a degraded taste, in the sentiments of love, to his fair lady Olivia, as she actually did fall in love with a domestic, and one who, from his extreme youth, was perhaps a greater reproach to her discretion than had she cast a tender regard upon her old and faithful servant." But where does she gather the fact of his age? Neither Maria nor Fabian ever cast that reproach upon him.

consideration the unprotected condition of his mistress, and the strict regard with which her state of real or dissembled mourning would draw the eyes of the world upon her house-affairs, Malvolio might feel the honour of the family in some sort in his 5 keeping ; as it appears not that Olivia had any more brothers, or kinsmen, to look to it — for Sir Toby had dropped all such nice respects at the buttery-hatch. That Malvolio was meant to be represented as possessing estimable qualities, the expression of the Duke in his anxiety to have him reconciled, almost infers : 10 “Pursue him, and entreat him to a peace.” Even in his abused state of chains and darkness, a sort of greatness seems never to desert him. He argues highly and well with the supposed Sir Topas, and philosophizes gallantly upon his straw.¹ There must have been some shadow of worth about the man ; he must have 15 been something more than a mere vapour — a thing of straw, or Jack in office — before Fabian and Maria could have ventured sending him upon a courting-errand to Olivia. There was some consonancy (as he would say) in the undertaking, or the jest would have been too bold even for that house of misrule. 20 There was “example for it,” said Malvolio ; “the lady of the Strachy married the yeoman of the wardrobe.” Possibly, too, he might remember — for it must have happened about his time — an instance of a Duchess of Malfy (a countrywoman of Olivia’s, and her equal at least) descending from her state to 25 court a steward :

The misery of them that are born great!
They are forced to woo because none dare woo them.

To be sure, the lady was not very tenderly handled for it by her brothers in the sequel, but their vengeance appears to have

¹ *Clown.* What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild fowl?

Mal. That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird.

Clown. What thinkest thou of his opinion?

Mal. I think nobly of the soul, and no way approve of his opinion.

been whetted rather by her presumption in re-marrying at all (when they had meditated the keeping of her fortune in their family), than by her choice of an inferior, of Antonio's noble merits especially, for her husband ; and, besides, Olivia's brother was just dead. Malvolio was a man of reading, and possibly 5 reflected upon these lines, or something like them, in his own country poetry : —

Ceremony has made many fools.
It is as easy way unto a duchess
As to a hatted dame, if her love answer : 10
But that by timorous honours, pale respects,
Idle degrees of fear, men make their ways
Hard of themselves.

“ ‘T is but fortune ; all is fortune. Maria once told me she did affect me ; and I have heard herself come thus near, that, 15 should she fancy, it should be one of my complexion.’ ” If here was no encouragement, the devil is in it. I wish we could get at the private history of all this. Between the Countess herself, serious or dissembling — for one hardly knows how to apprehend this fantastical great lady — and the practices of 20 that delicious little piece of mischief, Maria, the man might well be rapt into a fool’s paradise.

Bensley, accordingly, threw over the part an air of Spanish loftiness. He looked, spake, and moved like an old Castilian. He was starch, spruce, opinionated ; but his superstructure of 25 pride seemed bottomed upon a sense of worth. There was something in it beyond the coxcomb. It was big and swelling, but you could not be sure that it was hollow. You might wish to see it taken down, but you felt that it was upon an elevation. He was magnificent from the outset ; but when the decent 30 soberies of the character began to give way, and the poison of self-love, in his conceit of the Countess’s affection, gradually to work, you would have thought that the hero of *La Mancha*

in person stood before you. How he went smiling to himself ! with what ineffable carelessness would he twirl his gold chain ! what a dream it was ! you were infected with the illusion, and did not wish that it should be removed ! you had no room for 5 laughter ! if an unseasonable reflection of morality obtruded itself, it was a deep sense of the pitiable infirmity of the man's nature, that can lay him open to such frenzies — but in truth you rather admired than pitied the lunacy while it lasted — you felt that an hour of such mistake was worth an age with 10 the eyes open. Who would not wish to live but for a day in the conceit of such a lady's love as Olivia ? Why, the Duke would have given his principality but for a quarter of a minute, sleeping or waking, to have been so deluded. The man seemed to tread upon air, to taste manna, to walk with his head in the 15 clouds, to mate Hyperion. O ! shake not the castles of his pride — endure yet for a season, bright moments of confidence — "stand still, ye watches of the element," that Malvolio may be still in fancy fair Olivia's lord — but fate and retribution say no — I hear the mischievous titter of Maria — the witty 20 taunts of Sir Toby — the still more insupportable triumph of the foolish knight — the counterfeit Sir Topas is unmasked — and "thus the whirligig of time," as the true clown hath it, "brings in his revenges." I confess that I never saw the catastrophe of this character, while Bensley played it, without 25 a kind of tragic interest. There was good foolery too. Few now remember Dodd. What an Aguecheek the stage lost in him ! Lovegrove, who came nearest to the old actors, revived the character some few seasons ago, and made it sufficiently grotesque ; but Dodd was *it*, as it came out of nature's hands. 30 It might be said to remain *in puris naturalibus*. In expressing slowness of apprehension this actor surpassed all others. You could see the first dawn of an idea stealing slowly over his countenance, climbing up by little and little, with a painful process, till it cleared up at last to the fulness of a twilight

conception — its highest meridian. He seemed to keep back his intellect, as some have had the power to retard their pulsation. The balloon takes less time in filling, than it took to cover the expansion of his broad moony face over all its quarters with expression. A glimmer of understanding would appear in a corner of his eye, and for lack of fuel go out again. A part of his forehead would catch a little intelligence, and be a long time in communicating it to the remainder. 5

I am ill at dates, but I think it is now better than five-and-twenty years ago, that walking in the gardens of Gray's Inn 10 — they were then far finer than they are now — the accursed Verulam Buildings had not encroached upon all the east side of them, cutting out delicate green cranks, and shouldering away one of two of the stately alcoves of the terrace — the survivor stands gaping and relationless as if it remembered its 15 brother — they are still the best gardens of any of the Inns of Court, my beloved Temple not forgotten — have the gravest character, their aspect being altogether reverend and law-breathing — Bacon has left the impress of his foot upon their gravel walks — taking my afternoon solace on a summer day 20 upon the aforesaid terrace, a comely sad personage came towards me, whom, from his grave air and deportment, I judged to be one of the old Benchers of the Inn. He had a serious thoughtful forehead, and seemed to be in meditations of mortality. As I have an instinctive awe of old Benchers, I 25 was passing him with that sort of subindicative token of respect which one is apt to demonstrate towards a venerable stranger, and which rather denotes an inclination to greet him, than any positive motion of the body to that effect — a species of humility and will-worship which I observe, nine times out of 30 ten, rather puzzles than pleases the person it is offered to — when the face turning full upon me strangely identified itself with that of Dodd. Upon close inspection I was not mistaken. But could this sad thoughtful countenance be the same vacant

face of folly which I had hailed so often under circumstances of gaiety ; which I had never seen without a smile, or recognized but as the usher of mirth ; that looked out so formally flat in Foppington, so frothily pert in Tattle, so impotently 5 busy in Backbite ; so blankly divested of all meaning, or resolutely expressive of none, in Acres, in Fribble, and a thousand agreeable impertinences ? Was this the face — full of thought and carefulness — that had so often divested itself at will of every trace of either to give me diversion, to clear my cloudy 10 face for two or three hours at least of its furrows ? Was this the face — manly, sober, intelligent — which I had so often despised, made mocks at, made merry with ? The remembrance of the freedoms which I had taken with it came upon me with a reproach of insult. I could have asked it pardon. 15 I thought it looked upon me with a sense of injury. There is something strange as well as sad in seeing actors — your pleasant fellows particularly — subjected to and suffering the common lot — their fortunes, their casualties, their deaths, seem to belong to the scene, their actions to be amenable to poetic 20 justice only. We can hardly connect them with more awful responsibilities. The death of this fine actor took place shortly after this meeting. He had quitted the stage some months ; and as I learned afterwards, had been in the habit of resorting daily to these gardens almost to the day of his decease. In 25 these serious walks probably he was divesting himself of many scenic and some real vanities — weaning himself from the frivolities of the lesser and the greater theatre — doing gentle penance for a life of no very reprehensible fooleries, — taking off by degrees the buffoon mask which he might feel he had 30 worn too long — and rehearsing for a more solemn cast of part. Dying, he “ put on the weeds of Dominic.” ¹

¹ Dodd was a man of reading, and left at his death a choice collection of old English literature. I should judge him to have been a man of wit. I know one instance of an impromptu which no length of study

If a few can remember Dodd, many yet living will not easily forget the pleasant creature, who in those days enacted the part of the Clown to Dodd's Sir Andrew.—Richard, or rather Dicky Suett — for so in his lifetime he delighted to be called, and time hath ratified the appellation — lieth buried on the 5 north side of the cemetery of Holy Paul, to whose service his nonage and tender years were dedicated. There are who do yet remember him at that period — his pipe clear and harmonious. He would often speak of his chorister days, when he was "cherub Dicky." 10

What clipped his wings, or made it expedient that he should exchange the holy for the profane state; whether he had lost his good voice (his best recommendation to that office), like Sir John, "with hallooing and singing of anthems;" or whether he was adjudged to lack something, even in those 15 early years, of the gravity indispensable to an occupation which professeth to "commerce with the skies" — I could never rightly learn; but we find him, after the probation of a twelvemonth or so, reverting to a secular condition, and become one of us. 20

I think he was not altogether of that timber out of which cathedral seats and sounding-boards are hewed. But if a glad heart — kind and therefore glad — be any part of sanctity, then might the robe of Motley, with which he invested himself with so much humility after his deprivation, and which he 25 wore so long with so much blameless satisfaction to himself and to the public, be accepted for a surplice — his white stole, and *albe*.

could have bettered. My merry friend, Jem White, had seen him one evening in Aguecheek, and, recognizing Dodd the next day in Fleet Street, was irresistibly impelled to take off his hat and salute him as the identical Knight of the preceding evening with a "Save you, *Sir Andrew*." Dodd, not at all disconcerted at this unusual address from a stranger, with a courteous half-rebuking wave of the hand, put him off with an "Away, *Fool*."

The first fruits of his secularization was an engagement upon the boards of Old Drury, at which theatre he commenced, as I have been told, with adopting the manner of Parsons in old men's characters. At the period in which most of us knew 5 him, he was no more an imitator than he was in any true sense himself imitable.

He was the Robin Good-Fellow of the stage. He came in to trouble all things with a welcome perplexity, himself no whit troubled for the matter. He was known, like Puck, by his 10 note — *Ha ! Ha ! Ha !*—sometimes deepening to *Ho ! Ho ! Ho !* with an irresistible accession derived perhaps remotely from his ecclesiastical education, foreign to his prototype of, — *O La !* Thousands of hearts yet respond to the chuckling *O La !* of Dicky Suett, brought back to their remembrance by 15 the faithful transcript of his friend Mathews's mimicry. The “force of nature could no farther go.” He drolled upon the stock of these two syllables richer than the cuckoo.

Care, that troubles all the world, was forgotten in his composition. Had he had but two grains (nay, half a grain) of it, 20 he could never have supported himself upon those two spider's strings, which served him (in the latter part of his unmixed existence) as legs. A doubt or a scruple must have made him totter, a sigh have puffed him down ; the weight of a frown had staggered him, a wrinkle made him lose his balance. But 25 on he went, scrambling upon those airy stilts of his, with Robin Good-Fellow, “thorough brake, thorough briar,” reckless of a scratched face or a torn doublet.

Shakespeare foresaw him, when he framed his fools and jesters. They have all the true Suett stamp, a loose and shambling 30 gait, a slippery tongue, this last the ready midwife to a without-pain-delivered jest ; in words, light as air, venting truths deep as the centre ; with idlest rhymes tagging conceit when busiest, singing with Lear in the tempest, or Sir Toby at the buttery-hatch.

Jack Bannister and he had the fortune to be more of personal favourites with the town than any actors before or after. The difference, I take it, was this : — Jack was more *beloved* for his sweet, good-natured, moral pretensions. Dicky was more *liked* for his sweet, good-natured, no pretensions at all. 5 Your whole conscience stirred with Bannister's performance of Walter in the Children in the Wood — but Dicky seemed like a thing, as Shakespeare says of Love, too young to know what conscience is. He put us into Vesta's days. Evil fled before him — not as from Jack, as from an antagonist, — but because 10 it could not touch him, any more than a cannon-ball a fly. He was delivered from the burthen of that death ; and when Death came himself, not in metaphor, to fetch Dicky, it is recorded of him by Robert Palmer, who kindly watched his exit, that he received the last stroke, neither varying his 15 accustomed tranquillity, nor tune, with the simple exclamation, worthy to have been recorded in his epitaph — *O La ! O La ! Bobby !*

The elder Palmer (of stage-treading celebrity) commonly played Sir Toby in those days ; but there is a solidity of wit 20 in the jests of that half-Falstaff which he did not quite fill out. He was as much too showy, as Moody (who sometimes took the part) was dry and scottish. In sock or buskin there was an air of swaggering gentility about Jack Palmer. He was a gentleman with a slight infusion of *the footman*. His brother 25 Bob (of recenter memory), who was his shadow in everything while he lived, and dwindled into less than a shadow afterwards — was a gentleman with a little stronger infusion of the *latter ingredient* ; that was all. It is amazing how a little of the more or less makes a difference in these things. When you 30 saw Bobby in the Duke's Servant,¹ you said, what a pity such a pretty fellow was only a servant. When you saw Jack figuring in Captain Absolute, you thought you could trace his

¹ *High Life Below Stairs.*

promotion to some lady of quality who fancied the handsome fellow in his top-knot, and had bought him a commission. Therefore Jack in *Dick Amlet* was insuperable.

Jack had two voices, — both plausible, hypocritical, and insinuating ; but his secondary or supplemental voice still more decisively histrionic than his common one. It was reserved for the spectator ; and the *dramatis personæ* were supposed to know nothing at all about it. The *lies* of young Wilding, and the *sentiments* in Joseph Surface, were thus marked out in a sort of italics to the audience. This secret correspondence with the company before the curtain (which is the bane and death of tragedy) has an extremely happy effect in some kinds of comedy, in the more highly artificial comedy of Congreve or of Sheridan especially, where the absolute sense of reality (so indispensable to scenes of interest) is not required, or would rather interfere to diminish your pleasure. The fact is, you do not believe in such characters as Surface — the villain of artificial comedy — even while you read or see them. If you did, they would shock and not divert you. When Ben, in *Love for Love*, returns from sea, the following exquisite dialogue occurs at his first meeting with his father —

Sir Sampson. Thou hast been many a weary league, Ben, since I saw thee.

Ben. Ey, ey, been ! Been far enough, an that be all. — Well, father, 25 and how do all at home ? how does brother Dick, and brother Val ?

Sir Sampson. Dick ! body o' me, Dick has been dead these two years. I writ you word when you were at Leghorn.

Ben. Mess, that's true; Marry, I had forgot. Dick's dead, as you say — Well, and how ? — I have a many questions to ask you —

30 Here is an instance of insensibility which in real life would be revolting, or rather in real life could not have co-existed with the warm-hearted temperament of the character. But when you read it in the spirit with which such playful selections and specious combinations rather than strict *metaphrases* of

nature should be taken, or when you saw Bannister play it, it neither did, nor does, wound the moral sense at all. For what is Ben — the pleasant sailor which Bannister gives us — but a piece of satire — a creation of Congreve's fancy — a dreamy combination of all the accidents of a sailor's character — his contempt of money — his credulity to women — with that necessary estrangement from home which it is just within the verge of credibility to suppose *might* produce such an hallucination as is here described. We never think the worse of Ben for it, or feel it as a stain upon his character. But 10 when an actor comes, and instead of the delightful phantom — the creature dear to half-belief — which Bannister exhibited — displays before our eyes a downright concretion of a Wapping sailor — a jolly warm-hearted Jack Tar — and nothing else — when instead of investing it with a delicious confused- 15 ness of the head, and a veering undirected goodness of purpose — he gives to it a downright daylight understanding, and a full consciousness of its actions ; thrusting forward the sensibilities of the character with a pretence as if it stood upon nothing else, and was to be judged by them alone — we feel 20 the discord of the thing ; the scene is disturbed ; a real man has got in among the *dramatis personæ*, and puts them out. We want the sailor turned out. We feel that his true place is not behind the curtain but in the first or second gallery.

XVIII. THE PRAISE OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS

I LIKE to meet a sweep — understand me — not a grown 25 sweater — old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive — but one of those tender novices, blooming through their first nigritude, the maternal washings not quite effaced from the cheek — such as come forth with the dawn, or somewhat earlier, with their little professional notes sounding like the 30

peep peep of a young sparrow; or liker to the matin lark should I pronounce them, in their aërial ascents not seldom anticipating the sun-rise?

I have a kindly yearning towards these dim specks — poor 5 blots — innocent blacknesses —

I reverence these young Africans of our own growth — these almost clergy imps, who sport their cloth without assumption ; and from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys), in the nipping air of a December morning, preach a lesson of patience 10 to mankind.

When a child, what a mysterious pleasure it was to witness their operation ! to see a chit no bigger than one's self enter, one knew not by what process, into what seemed the *fauces Averni* — to pursue him in imagination, as he went sounding 15 on through so many dark stifling caverns, horrid shades ! — to shudder with the idea that “ now, surely, he must be lost for ever ! ” — to revive at hearing his feeble shout of discovered daylight — and then (O fulness of delight) running out of doors, to come just in time to see the sable phenomenon 20 emerge in safety, the brandished weapon of his art victorious like some flag waved over a conquered citadel ! I seem to remember having been told, that a bad sweep was once left in a stack with his brush, to indicate which way the wind blew. It was an awful spectacle certainly ; not much unlike the old 25 stage direction in Macbeth, where the “ Apparition of child crowned with a tree in his hand rises.”

Reader, if thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early rambles, it is good to give him a penny. It is better to give him twopence. If it be starving weather, and to the 30 proper troubles of his hard occupation, a pair of kibed heels (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester.

There is a composition, the groundwork of which I have understood to be the sweet wood yclept sassafras. This wood

boiled down to a kind of tea, and tempered with an infusion of milk and sugar, hath to some tastes a delicacy beyond the China luxury. I know not how thy palate may relish it ; for myself, with every deference to the judicious Mr. Read, who hath time out of mind kept open a shop (the only one he 5 avers in London) for the vending of this “wholesome and pleasant beverage,” on the south side of Fleet Street, as thou approachest Bridge Street — *the only Salopian house*, — I have never yet adventured to dip my own particular lip in a basin of his commended ingredients — a cautious premonition to the 10 olfactories constantly whispering to me, that my stomach must infallibly, with all due courtesy, decline it. Yet I have seen palates, otherwise not uninstructed in dietetical elegances, sup it up with avidity.

I know not by what particular conformation of the organ it 15 happens, but I have always found that this composition is surprisingly gratifying to the palate of a young chimney-sweeper — whether the oily particles (sassafras is slightly oleaginous) do attenuate and soften the fuliginous concretions, which are sometimes found (in dissections) to adhere to the roof of the 20 mouth in these unfledged practitioners ; or whether Nature, sensible that she had mingled too much of bitter wood in the lot of these raw victims, caused to grow out of the earth her sassafras for a sweet lenitive — but so it is, that no possible taste or odour to the senses of a young chimney-sweeper 25 can convey a delicate excitement comparable to this mixture. Being penniless, they will yet hang their black heads over the ascending steam, to gratify one sense, if possible, seemingly no less pleased than those domestic animals — cats — when they purr over a new-found sprig of valerian. There is something 30 more in these sympathies than philosophy can inculcate.

Now albeit Mr. Read boasteth, not without reason, that his is the *only Salopian house* ; yet be it known to thee, reader — if thou art one who keepest what are called good hours, thou

art happily ignorant of the fact — he hath a race of industrious imitators, who from stalls, and under open sky, dispense the same savoury mess to humbler customers, at the dead time of the dawn, when (as extremes meet) the rake, reeling home 5 from his midnight cups, and the hard-handed artisan leaving his bed to resume the premature labours of the day, jostle, not unfrequently to the manifest disconcerting of the former, for the honours of the pavement. It is the time when, in summer, between the expired and the not yet relumined kitchen-
10 fires, the kennels of our fair metropolis give forth their least satisfactory odours. The rake who wisheth to dissipate his o'er night vapours in more grateful coffee, curses the ungenial fume, as he passeth ; but the artisan stops to taste, and blesses the fragrant breakfast.

15 This is *Saloop* — the precocious herb-woman's darling — the delight of the early gardener, who transports his smoking cabbages by break of day from Hammersmith to Covent Garden's famed piazzas — the delight, and, oh I fear, too often the envy, of the unpennied sweep. Him shouldest thou haply 20 encounter, with his dim visage pendent over the grateful steam, regale him with a sumptuous basin (it will cost thee but three halfpennies) and a slice of delicate bread and butter (an added halfpenny) so may thy culinary fires, eased of the o'ercharged secretions from thy worse-placed hospitalities, curl up a lighter
25 volume to the welkin — so may the descending soot never taint thy costly well-ingrediente soups — nor the odious cry, quick-reaching from street to street, of the *fired chimney*, invite the rattling engines from ten adjacent parishes, to disturb for a casual scintillation thy peace and pocket !

30 I am by nature extremely susceptible of street affronts ; the jeers and taunts of the populace ; the low-bred triumph they display over the casual trip, or splashed stocking, of a gentleman. Yet can I endure the jocularity of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness. — In the last winter but one,

pacing along Cheapside with my accustomed precipitation when I walk westward, a treacherous slide brought me upon my back in an instant. I scrambled up with pain and shame enough — yet outwardly trying to face it down, as if nothing had happened — when the roguish grin of one of these young wits 5 encountered me. There he stood, pointing me out with his dusky finger to the mob, and to a poor woman (I suppose his mother) in particular, till the tears for the exquisiteness of the fun (so he thought it) worked themselves out at the corners of his poor red eyes, red from many a previous weeping, and soot-inflamed, yet twinkling through all with such a joy, snatched out of desolation, that Hogarth — but Hogarth has got him already (how could he miss him?) in the March to Finchley, grinning at the pie-man — there he stood, as he stands in the picture, irremovable, as if the jest was to last for ever — 15 with such a maximum of glee, and minimum of mischief, in his mirth — for the grin of a genuine sweep hath absolutely no malice in it — that I could have been content, if the honour of a gentleman might endure it, to have remained his butt and his mockery till midnight. 20

I am by theory obdurate to the seductiveness of what are called a fine set of teeth. Every pair of rosy lips (the ladies must pardon me) is a casket presumably holding such jewels; but, methinks, they should take leave to "air" them as frugally as possible. The fine lady, or fine gentleman, who show me their 25 teeth, show me bones. Yet must I confess, that from the mouth of a true sweep a display (even to ostentation) of those white and shining ossifications, strikes me as an agreeable anomaly in manners, and an allowable piece of foppery. It is, as when

A sable cloud

30

Turns forth her silver lining on the night.

It is like some remnant of gentry not quite extinct; a badge of better days; a hint of nobility: — and, doubtless, under

the obscuring darkness and double night of their forlorn dis-
guisement, oftentimes lurketh good blood, and gentle condi-
tions, derived from lost ancestry, and a lapsed pedigree. The
5 premature apprenticements of these tender victims give but
too much encouragement, I fear, to clandestine, and almost
infantile abductions ; the seeds of civility and true courtesy, so
often discernible in these young grafts (not otherwise to be
accounted for) plainly hint at some forced adoptions ; many
10 noble Rachels mourning for their children, even in our days,
countenance the fact ; the tales of fairy-spiriting may shadow
a lamentable verity, and the recovery of the young Montagu be
but a solitary instance of good fortune, out of many irreparable
and hopeless *defiliations*.

In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castle, a few years since
15 — under a ducal canopy — (that seat of the Howards is an
object of curiosity to visitors, chiefly for its beds, in which the
late Duke was especially a connoisseur) — encircled with cur-
tains of delicatest crimson, with starry coronets inwoven —
folded between a pair of sheets whiter and softer than the lap
20 where Venus lulled Ascanius — was discovered by chance, after
all methods of search had failed, at noonday, fast asleep, a
lost chimney-sweeper. The little creature, having somehow
confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly
chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this
25 magnificent chamber ; and, tired with his tedious explorations,
was unable to resist the delicious invitement to repose, which
he there saw exhibited ; so, creeping between the sheets very
quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a
young Howard.

30 Such is the account given to the visitors at the Castle. —
But I cannot help seeming to perceive a confirmation of what
I have just hinted at in this story. A high instinct was at work
in the case, or I am mistaken. Is it probable that a poor
child of that description, with whatever weariness he might be

visited, would have ventured, under such a penalty as he would be taught to expect, to uncover the sheets of a Duke's bed, and deliberately to lay himself down between them, when the rug, or the carpet, presented an obvious couch, still far above his pretensions — is this probable, I would ask, if the great 5 power of nature, which I contend for, had not been manifested within him, prompting to the adventure? Doubtless this young nobleman (for such my mind misgives me that he must be) was allured by some memory, not amounting to full consciousness, of his condition in infancy, when he was used to 10 be lapt by his mother, or his nurse, in just such sheets as he there found, into which he was now but creeping back as into his proper *incunabula*, and resting-place. By no other theory, than by this sentiment of a pre-existent state (as I may call it), can I explain a deed so venturous, and, indeed, upon any 15 other system, so indecorous, in this tender, but unseasonable, sleeper.

My pleasant friend JEM WHITE was so impressed with a belief of metamorphoses like this frequently taking place, that in some sort to reverse the wrongs of fortune in these poor 20 changelings, he instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a solemn supper held in Smithfield, upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bartholomew. Cards were issued a week before to the master-sweeps in and about the metropolis, confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an elderly stripling would get in among us, and be good-naturedly winked at; but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate wight, indeed, who, relying upon his dusky suit, had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was provisionally discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper (all is not soot which looks so), was quoited out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment; but in general the greatest harmony prevailed. The place

chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity ; but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it.

5 The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlours three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savour. JAMES WHITE, as head waiter, had charge

10 of the first table ; and myself, with our trusty companion BIGOD, ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clamouring and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table — for Rochester in his maddest days could not have done the humours of the scene with more spirit than my friend.

15 After some general expression of thanks for the honour the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing, half-cursing “ the gentleman,” and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute,

20 whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave, while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. O it was a pleasure to see the sable younkers lick in the unctuous meat, with *his* more unctuous sayings — how he would fit the tit-bits to the puny mouths,

25 reserving the lengthier links for the seniors — how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some young desperado, declaring it “ must to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman’s eating ” — how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust, to a

30 tender juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony, — how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good, he should lose their custom ; with a special recommendation to wipe the lip

before drinking. Then we had our toasts — “The King,” — the “Cloth,” — which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering ; — and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, “ May the Brush supersede the Laurel.” All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather 5 felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a “Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so,” which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans ; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on 10 these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reeking sausages, which pleased them mightily, and was the savouriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

Golden lads and lasses must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

15

JAMES WHITE is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died — of my world at least. His old clients look for him among the pens ; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smithfield 20 departed for ever.

XIX. A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

MANKIND, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend M. was obliging enough to read and explain to me, for the first seventy thousand ages ate their meat raw, clawing or biting it from the living animal, just as they do in Abyssinia to this 25 day. This period is not obscurely hinted at by their great Confucius in the second chapter of his Mundane Mutations, where he designates a kind of golden age by the term Chofang, literally the Cook’s holiday. The manuscript goes on to

say, that the art of roasting, or rather broiling (which I take to be the elder brother) was accidentally discovered in the manner following. The swine-herd, Ho-*ti*, having gone out into the woods one morning, as his manner was, to collect mast 5 for his hogs, left his cottage in the care of his eldest son Bo-*bo*, a great lubberly boy, who being fond of playing with fire, as younkers of his age commonly are, let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw, which kindling quickly, spread the conflagration over every part of their poor mansion, till it was reduced to 10 ashes. Together with the cottage (a sorry antediluvian make-shift of a building, you may think it), what was of much more importance, a fine litter of new-farrowed pigs, no less than nine in number, perished. China pigs have been esteemed a luxury all over the East from the remotest periods that we read 15 of. Bo-*bo* was in the utmost consternation, as you may think, not so much for the sake of the tenement, which his father and he could easily build up again with a few dry branches, and the labour of an hour or two, at any time, as for the loss of the pigs. While he was thinking what he should say to his 20 father, and wringing his hands over the smoking remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an odour assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from? — not from the burnt cottage — he had smelt that smell before — indeed this was by no means 25 the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young firebrand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to 30 feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burnt his fingers, and to cool them he applied them in his booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crumbs of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world's life indeed, for before him no man had known

it) he tasted — *crackling!* Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now, still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious ; and, surrendering himself up 5 to the new-born pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole handfuls of the scorched skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributory cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young 10 rogue's shoulders, as thick as hail-stones, which Bo-bo heeded not any more than if they had been flies. The tickling pleasure, which he experienced in his lower regions, had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those remote quarters. His father might lay on, but he could not 15 beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued.

“ You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring? Is it not enough that you have burnt me down three houses 20 with your dog's tricks, and be hanged to you, but you must be eating fire, and I know not what — what have you got there, I say? ”

“ O father, the pig, the pig, do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats.” 25

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he cursed himself that ever he should beget a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bo, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig, and fairly rending it asunder, 30 thrust the lesser half by main force into the fists of Ho-ti, still shouting out, “ Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste, — O Lord,” — with such-like barbarous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the crackling scorching his fingers, as it had done his son's, and applying the same 5 remedy to them, he in his turn tasted some of its flavour, which, make what sour mouths he would for a pretence, proved not altogether displeasing to him. In conclusion (for the manuscript here is a little tedious) both father and son fairly sat down to the mess, and never left off till they had despatched 10 all that remained of the litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let the secret escape, for the neighbours would certainly have stoned them for a couple of abominable wretches, who could think of improving upon the good meat which God had sent them. Nevertheless, 15 strange stories got about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottage was burnt down now more frequently than ever. Nothing but fires from this time forward. Some would break out in broad day, others in the night-time. As often as the sow farrowed, so sure was the house of Ho-ti to be in a 20 blaze; and Ho-ti himself, which was the more remarkable, instead of chastising his son, seemed to grow more indulgent to him than ever. At length they were watched, the terrible mystery discovered, and father and son summoned to take their trial at Pekin, then an inconsiderable assize town. Evidence was given, the obnoxious food itself produced in court, 25 and verdict about to be pronounced, when the foreman of the jury begged that some of the burnt pig, of which the culprits stood accused, might be handed into the box. He handled it, and they all handled it, and burning their fingers, as Bo-bo and his father had done before them, and nature 30 prompting to each of them the same remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest charge which judge had ever given, — to the surprise of the whole court, townsfolk, strangers, reporters, and all present — without leaving the box, or

any manner of consultation whatever, they brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.

The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at the manifest iniquity of the decision ; and, when the court was dismissed, went privily, and bought up all the pigs that could be had for 5 love or money. In a few days his Lordship's town house was observed to be on fire. The thing took wing, and now there was nothing to be seen but fires in every direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear all over the district. The insurance offices one and all shut up shop. People built slighter 10 and slighter every day, until it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world. Thus this custom of firing houses continued, till in process of time, says my manuscript, a sage arose, like our Locke, who made a discovery, that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any 15 other animal, might be cooked (*burnt*, as they called it) without the necessity of consuming a whole house to dress it. Then first began the rude form of a gridiron. Roasting by the string, or spit, came in a century or two later, I forget in whose dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes the manu- 20 script, do the most useful, and seemingly the most obvious arts, make their way among mankind. —

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed, that if a worthy pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) 25 could be assigned in favour of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.

Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibilis*, I will maintain it to be the most delicate — *princeps obsoniorum*.

I speak not of your grown porkers — things between pig and 30 pork — those hobbydehoys — but a young and tender suckling — under a moon old — guiltless as yet of the sty — with no original speck of the *amor immunditiae*, the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest — his voice as yet not broken,

but something between a childish treble, and a grumble — the mild forerunner, or *præludium*, of a grunt.

He must be roasted. I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled — but what a sacrifice of the exte-
5 rior tegument !

There is no flavour comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, *crackling*, as it is well called — the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle
10 resistance — with the adhesive oleaginous — O call it not fat — but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it — the tender blossoming of fat — fat cropped in the bud — taken in the shoot — in the first innocence — the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food — the lean, no lean, but a kind of
15 animal manna, — or, rather, fat and lean (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other, that both together make but one ambrosian result, or common substance.

Behold him, while he is “doing” — it seemeth rather a refreshing warmth, than a scorching heat, that he is so passive
20 to. How equably he twirleth round the string ! — Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age, he hath wept out his pretty eyes — radiant jellies — shooting stars —

See him in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth ! —
25 wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and indocility which too often accompany maturer swinehood ? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal — wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation — from these sins he is happily snatched away —

30 Ere sin could blight, or sorrow fade,
 Death came with timely care —

his memory is odoriferous — no clown curseth, while his stomach half rejecteth, the rank bacon — no coalheaver bolteth him

in reeking sausages — he hath a fair sepulchre in the grateful stomach of the judicious epicure — and for such a tomb might be content to die.

He is the best of saps. Pine-apple is great. She is indeed almost too transcendent — a delight, if not sinful, yet so like to sinning, that really a tender-conscienced person would do well to pause — too ravishing for mortal taste, she woundeth and excoriateth the lips that approach her — like lovers' kisses, she biteth — she is a pleasure bordering on pain from the fierceness and insanity of her relish — but she stoppeth at the palate — she meddleth not with the appetite — and the coarsest hunger might barter her consistently for a mutton chop.

Pig — let me speak his praise — is no less provocative of the appetite, than he is satisfactory to the criticalness of the censorious palate. The strong man may batten on him, and the weakling refuseth not his mild juices.

Unlike to mankind's mixed characters, a bundle of virtues and vices, inexplicably intertwined, and not to be unravelled without hazard, he is — good throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another. He helpeth, as far as his little means extend, all around. He is the least envious of banquets. He is all neighbours' fare.

I am one of those, who freely and ungrudgingly impart a share of the good things of this life which fall to their lot (few as mine are in this kind) to a friend. I protest I take as great an interest in my friend's pleasures, his relishes, and proper satisfactions, as in mine own. "Presents," I often say, "endear Absents." Hares, pheasants, partridges, snipes, barn-door chickens (those "tame villatic fowl"), capons, plovers, brawn, barrels of oysters, I dispense as freely as I receive them. I love to taste them, as it were, upon the tongue of my friend. But a stop must be put somewhere. One would not, like Lear, "give everything." I make my stand upon pig. Methinks it is an ingratitude to the Giver of all good flavours, to

extradomiciliate, or send out of the house, slightly (under pretext of friendship, or I know not what), a blessing so particularly adapted, predestined, I may say, to my individual palate. — It argues an insensibility.

5 I remember a touch of conscience in this kind at school. My good old aunt, who never parted from me at the end of a holiday without stuffing a sweetmeat, or some nice thing into my pocket, had dismissed me one evening with a smoking plum-cake, fresh from the oven. In my way to school (it was over
10 London Bridge) a grey-headed old beggar saluted me (I have no doubt at this time of day that he was a counterfeit). I had no pence to console him with, and in the vanity of self-denial, and the very coxcombry of charity, schoolboy-like, I made him a present of — the whole cake! I walked on a
15 little, buoyed up, as one is on such occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction ; but before I had got to the end of the bridge, my better feelings returned, and I burst into tears, thinking how ungrateful I had been to my good aunt, to go and give her good gift away to a stranger, that I had
20 never seen before, and who might be a bad man for aught I knew ; and then I thought of the pleasure my aunt would be taking in thinking that I — I myself, and not another — would eat her nice cake — and what should I say to her the next time I saw her — how naughty I was to part with her pretty
25 present — and the odour of that spicy cake came back upon my recollection, and the pleasure and the curiosity I had taken in seeing her make it, and her joy when she sent it to the oven, and how disappointed she would feel that I had never had a bit of it in my mouth at last — and I blamed my impertinent
30 spirit of alms-giving, and out-of-place hypocrisy of goodness, and above all I wished never to see the face again of that insidious, good-for-nothing, old grey impostor.

Our ancestors were nice in their method of sacrificing these tender victims. We read of pigs whipt to death with something

of a shock, as we hear of any other obsolete custom. The age of discipline is gone by, or it would be curious to inquire (in a philosophical light merely) what effect this process might have towards intenerating and dulcifying a substance, naturally so mild and dulcet as the flesh of young pigs. It looks like 5 refining a violet. Yet we should be cautious, while we condemn the inhumanity, how we censure the wisdom of the practice. It might impart a gusto —

I remember an hypothesis, argued upon by the young students, when I was at St. Omer's, and maintained with 10 much learning and pleasantry on both sides, "Whether, supposing that the flavour of a pig who obtained his death by whipping (*per flagellationem extremam*) superadded a pleasure upon the palate of a man more intense than any possible suffering we can conceive in the animal, is man justified in 15 using that method of putting the animal to death?" I forget the decision.

His sauce should be considered. Decidedly, a few bread crumbs, done up with his liver and brains, and a dash of mild sage. But, banish, dear Mrs. Cook, I beseech you, the 20 whole onion tribe. Barbecue your whole hogs to your palate, steep them in shalots, stuff them out with plantations of the rank and guilty garlic; you cannot poison them, or make them stronger than they are — but consider, he is a weakling — a flower.

25

XX. ON THE ACTING OF MUNDEN

NOT many nights ago I had come home from seeing this extraordinary performer in Cockletop; and when I retired to my pillow, his whimsical image still stuck by me, in a manner as to threaten sleep. In vain I tried to divest myself of it, by conjuring up the most opposite associations. I resolved to be 30

him, amounts to a Platonic idea. He understands a leg of mutton in its quiddity. He stands wondering, amid the commonplace materials of life, like primeval man with the sun and stars about him.

XXI. MUNDEN'S FAREWELL

5 THE regular playgoers ought to put on mourning, for the king of broad comedy is dead to the drama! — Alas! — Munden is no more! — give sorrow vent. He may yet walk the town, pace the pavement in a seeming existence — eat, drink, and nod to his friends in all the affectation of life —
10 but Munden, — *the* Munden! — Munden, who with the bunch of countenances, the bouquet of faces, is gone for ever from the lamps, and, as far as comedy is concerned, is as dead as Garrick! When an actor retires (we will put the *suicide* as mildly as possible) how many worthy persons perish with him!
15 — With Munden, — Sir Peter Teazle must experience a shock — Sir Robert Bramble gives up the ghost — Crack ceases to breathe. Without Munden what becomes of Dozey? Where shall we seek Jemmy Jumps? Nipperkin and a thousand of such admirable fooleries fall to nothing, and the departure
20 therefore of such an actor as Munden is a dramatic calamity. On the night that this inestimable humourist took farewell of the public, he also took his benefit: — a benefit in which the public assuredly did not participate. The play was Coleman's *Poor Gentleman*, with Tom Dibdin's farce of *Past Ten o'Clock*.
25 Reader, we all know Munden in Sir Robert Bramble, and Old Tobacco complexioned Dozey; — we all have seen the old hearty baronet in his light sky-blue coat and genteel cocked hat; and we have all seen the weather-beaten old pensioner, Dear Old Dozey, tacking about the stage in that intense blue
30 sea livery — drunk as heart could wish, and right valorous in

memory. On this night Munden seemed like the Gladiator "to rally life's whole energies to die," and as we were present at this great display of his powers, and as this will be the last opportunity that will ever be afforded us to speak of this admirable performer, we shall "consecrate," as Old John 5 Buncle says, "a paragraph to him."

The house was full,—*full!*—pshaw! that's an empty word!—The house was stuffed, crammed with people—crammed from the swing door of the pit to the back seat in the banished *one shilling*. A quart of audience may be said 10 (vintner-like, may it be said) to have been squeezed into a pint of theatre. Every hearty play-going Londoner, who remembered Munden years agone, mustered up his courage and his money for this benefit—and middle-aged people were therefore by no means scarce. The comedy chosen for 15 the occasion, is one that travels a long way without a guard; it is not until the third or fourth act, we think, that Sir Robert Bramble appears on the stage. When he entered, his reception was earnest,—noisy,—outrageous,—waving of hats and handkerchiefs,—deafening shouts,—clamorous beating of 20 sticks,—all the various ways in which the heart is accustomed to manifest its joy were had recourse to on this occasion. Mrs. Bamfield worked away with a sixpenny fan till she scuddled only under bare poles. Mr. Whittington wore out the ferule of a new nine-and-sixpenny umbrella. 25 Gratitude did great damage on the joyful occasion.

The old performer, the veteran, as he appropriately called himself in the farewell speech, was plainly overcome; he pressed his hands together, he planted one solidly on his breast, he bowed, he sidled, he cried! When the noise 30 subsided (which it invariably does at last) the comedy proceeded, and Munden gave an admirable picture of the rich, eccentric, charitable old bachelor baronet, who goes about with Humphrey Dobbin at his heels, and philanthropy in his

heart. How crustily and yet how kindly he takes Humphrey's contradictions ! How readily he puts himself into an attitude for arguing ! How tenderly he gives a loose to his heart on the apprehension of Frederick's duel. In truth he played 5 Sir Robert in his very ripest manner, and it was impossible not to feel in the very midst of pleasure regret that Munden should then be before us for the last time.

In the farce he became richer and richer ; Old Dozey is a plant from Greenwich. The bronzed face—and neck to 10 match—the long curtain of a coat—the straggling white hair—the propensity, the determined attachment to grog, are all from Greenwich. Munden, as Dozey, seems never to have been out of action, sun, and drink. He looks (alas he *looked*) fireproof. His face and throat were dried like a 15 raisin, and his legs walked under the rum-and-water with all the indecision which that inestimable beverage usually inspires. It is truly tacking, not walking. He *steers* at a table, and the tide of grog now and then bears him off the point. On this night, he seemed to us to be doomed to fall in action, and 20 we therefore looked at him, as some of the *Victory's* crew are said to have gazed upon Nelson, with a consciousness that his ardour and his uniform were worn for the last time. In the scene where Dozey describes a sea fight, the actor never was greater, and he seemed the personification of an old seventy- 25 four ! His coat hung like a flag at his poop ! His phiz was not a whit less highly coloured than one of those lustrous visages which generally superintend the head of a ship ! There was something cumbrous, indecisive, and awful in his veerings ! Once afloat, it appeared impossible for him to come to his 30 moorings ; once at anchor, it did not seem an easy thing to get him under weigh !

The time, however, came for the fall of the curtain, and for the fall of Munden ! The farce of the night was finished. The farce of the long forty years' play was over ! He stepped

forward, not as Dozey, but as Munden, and we heard him address us from the stage for the last time. He trusted, unwisely we think, to a written paper. He *read* of "heart-felt recollections," and "indelible impressions." He stammered, and he pressed his heart,—and put on his spectacles,—and blundered his written gratitudes,—and wiped his eyes, and bowed— and stood,— and at last staggered away for ever ! The plan of his farewell was bad, but the long life of excellence which really made his farewell pathetic, overcame all defects, and the people and Joe Munden parted like lovers ! Well ! 10 Farewell to the Rich Old Heart ! May thy retirement be as full of repose, as thy public life was full of excellence ! We must all have our farewell benefit in our turn.

LAST ESSAYS OF ELIA

XXII. DETACHED THOUGHTS ON BOOKS AND READING

To mind the inside of a book is to entertain one's self with the forced product of another man's brain. Now I think a man of quality and breeding may be much amused with the natural sprouts of his own. — Lord Foppington, in the *Relapse*.

AN ingenious acquaintance of my own was so much struck with this bright sally of his Lordship, that he has left off reading altogether, to the great improvement of his originality. At the hazard of losing some credit on this head, I must confess 5 that I dedicate no inconsiderable portion of my time to other people's thoughts. I dream away my life in others' speculations. I love to lose myself in other men's minds. When I am not walking, I am reading ; I cannot sit and think. Books think for me.

10 I have no repugnances. Shaftesbury is not too genteel for me, nor Jonathan Wild too low. I can read anything which I call a *book*. There are things in that shape which I cannot allow for such.

In this catalogue of *books which are no books* — *biblia a-biblia* 15 — I reckon Court Calendars, Directories, Pocket Books (the Literary excepted), Draught Boards bound and lettered at the back, Scientific Treatises, Almanacks, Statutes at Large ; the works of Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, Beattie, Soame Jenyns, and, generally, all those volumes which “no gentleman's library 20 should be without :” the Histories of Flavius Josephus (that

learned Jew), and Paley's Moral Philosophy. With these exceptions, I can read almost anything. I bless my stars for a taste so catholic, so unexcluding.

I confess that it moves my spleen to see these *things in books' clothing* perched upon shelves, like false saints, usurpers of true shrines, intruders into the sanctuary, thrusting out the legitimate occupants. To reach down a well-bound semblance of a volume, and hope it some kind-hearted play-book, then, opening what "seem its leaves," to come bolt upon a withering Population Essay. To expect a Steele, or a Farquhar, and 10 find — Adam Smith. To view a well-arranged assortment of blockheaded *Encyclopædias* (*Anglicanas* or *Metropolitanas*) set out in an array of Russia, or Morocco, when a tithe of that good leather would comfortably re-clothe my shivering folios; would renovate Paracelsus himself, and enable old Raymund 15 Lully to look like himself again in the world. I never see these impostors, but I long to strip them, to warm my ragged veterans in their spoils.

To be strong-backed and neat-bound is the desideratum of a volume. Magnificence comes after. This, when it can be 20 afforded, is not to be lavished upon all kinds of books indiscriminately. I would not dress a set of Magazines, for instance, in full suit. The *déshabille*, or half-binding (with Russia backs ever) is *our* costume. A Shakespeare, or a Milton (unless the first editions), it were mere foppery to trick out in gay apparel. 25 The possession of them confers no distinction. The exterior of them (the things themselves being so common), strange to say, raises no sweet emotions, no tickling sense of property in the owner. Thomson's Seasons, again, looks best (I maintain it) a little torn, and dog's-eared. How beautiful to a genuine 30 lover of reading are the sullied leaves, and worn-out appearance, nay, the very odour (beyond Russia), if we would not forget kind feelings in fastidiousness, of an old "Circulating Library" Tom Jones, or Vicar of Wakefield! How they speak of the

thousand thumbs, that have turned over their pages with delight! — of the lone sempstress whom they may have cheered (milliner or harder-working mantua-maker) after her long day's needle-toil, running far into midnight, when she has snatched an hour, 5 ill spared from sleep, to steep her cares, as in some Lethean cup, in spelling out their enchanting contents! Who would have them a whit less soiled? What better condition could we desire to see them in?

In some respects the better a book is, the less it demands 10 from binding. Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, and all that class of perpetually self-reproductive volumes — Great Nature's Stereotypes — we see them individually perish with less regret, because we know the copies of them to be "eterne." But where a book is at once both good and rare — where the individual is 15 almost the species, and when *that* perishes,

We know not where is that Promethean torch
That can its light relumine —

such a book, for instance, as the Life of the Duke of Newcastle, by his Duchess — no casket is rich enough, no casing sufficiently 20 durable, to honour and keep safe such a jewel.

Not only rare volumes of this description, which seem hopeless ever to be reprinted; but old editions of writers, such as Sir Philip Sydney, Bishop Taylor, Milton in his prose-works, Fuller — of whom we *have* reprints, yet the books themselves, 25 though they go about, and are talked of here and there, we know, have not endenitened themselves (nor possibly ever will) in the national heart, so as to become stock books — it is good to possess these in durable and costly covers. I do not care for a First Folio of Shakespeare. You cannot make a *pet* 30 book of an author whom everybody reads. I rather prefer the common editions of Rowe and Tonson, without notes, and with *plates*, which, being so execrably bad, serve as maps, or modest remembrancers, to the text; and without pretending to any

supposable emulation with it, are so much better than the Shakespeare gallery *engravings*, which *did*. I have a community of feeling with my countrymen about his Plays, and I like those editions of him best, which have been oftenest tumbled about and handled.—On the contrary, I cannot read 5 Beaumont and Fletcher but in Folio. The Octavo editions are painful to look at. I have no sympathy with them. If they were as much read as the current editions of the other poet, I should prefer them in that shape to the older one. I do not know a more heartless sight than the reprint of the 10 Anatomy of Melancholy. What need was there of unearthing the bones of that fantastic old great man, to expose them in a winding-sheet of the newest fashion to modern censure? what hapless stationer could dream of Burton ever becoming popular? — The wretched Malone could not do worse, when he bribed 15 the sexton of Stratford church to let him whitewash the painted effigy of old Shakespeare, which stood there, in rude but lively fashion depicted, to the very colour of the cheek, the eye, the eyebrow, hair, the very dress he used to wear — the only authentic testimony we had, however imperfect, of these curious parts 20 and parcels of him. They covered him over with a coat of white paint. By —, if I had been a justice of peace for Warwickshire, I would have clapped both commentator and sexton fast in the stocks, for a pair of meddling sacrilegious varlets. 25

I think I see them at their work — these sapient trouble-tombs.

Shall I be thought fantastical, if I confess, that the names of some of our poets sound sweeter, and have a finer relish to the ear — to mine, at least — than that of Milton or of Shakespeare? It may be, that the latter are more staled and rung upon in common discourse. The sweetest names, and which carry a perfume in the mention, are, Kit Marlowe, Drayton, Drummond of Hawthornden, and Cowley.

Much depends upon *when* and *where* you read a book. In the five or six impatient minutes, before the dinner is quite ready, who would think of taking up the Faërie Queene for a stop-gap, or a volume of Bishop Andrewes' sermons?

5 Milton almost requires a solemn service of music to be played before you enter upon him. But he brings his music, to which, who listens, had need bring docile thoughts, and purged ears.

Winter evenings — the world shut out — with less of ceremony the gentle Shakespeare enters. At such a season, the
10 *Tempest*, or his own *Winter's Tale* —

These two poets you cannot avoid reading aloud — to yourself, or (as it chances) to some single person listening. More than one — and it degenerates into an audience.

Books of quick interest, that hurry on for incidents, are for
15 the eye to glide over only. It will not do to read them out. I could never listen to even the better kind of modern novels without extreme irksomeness.

A newspaper, read out, is intolerable. In some of the Bank offices it is the custom (to save so much individual time) for
20 one of the clerks — who is the best scholar — to commence upon the Times, or the Chronicle, and recite its entire contents aloud *pro bono publico*. With every advantage of lungs and elocution, the effect is singularly vapid. In barbers' shops and public-houses a fellow will get up, and spell out a paragraph,
25 which he communicates as some discovery. Another fellow with *his* selection. So the entire journal transpires at length by piece-meal. Seldom-readers are slow readers, and, without this expedient, no one in the company would probably ever travel through the contents of a whole paper.

30 Newspapers always excite curiosity. No one ever lays one down without a feeling of disappointment.

What an eternal time that gentleman in black, at Nando's, keeps the paper! I am sick of hearing the waiter bawling out incessantly, "The Chronicle is in hand, sir."

As in these little diurnals I generally skip the Foreign News, the Debates and the Politics, I find the *Morning Herald* by far the most entertaining of them. It is an agreeable miscellany rather than a newspaper.

Coming in to an inn at night—having ordered your supper 5—what can be more delightful than to find lying in the window-seat, left there time out of mind by the carelessness of some former guest—two or three numbers of the old Town and Country Magazine, with its amusing *tête-à-tête* pictures—“The Royal Lover and Lady G—— ;” “The Melting Pla-tonic and the Old Beau,”—and such-like antiquated scandal? Would you exchange it—at that time, and in that place—for a better book?

Poor Tobin, who latterly fell blind, did not regret it so much for the weightier kinds of reading—the Paradise Lost, 15 or Comus, he could have *read* to him—but he missed the pleasure of skimming over with his own eye a magazine, or a light pamphlet.

I should not care to be caught in the serious avenues of some cathedral alone, and reading *Candide*. 20

I do not remember a more whimsical surprise than having been once detected—by a familiar damsels—reclined at my ease upon the grass, on Primrose Hill (her Cythera), reading — *Pamela*. There was nothing in the book to make a man seriously ashamed at the exposure; but as she seated herself 25 down by me, and seemed determined to read in company, I could have wished it had been—any other book. We read on very sociably for a few pages; and, not finding the author much to her taste, she got up, and—went away. Gentle casuist, I leave it to thee to conjecture, whether the blush (for there was 30 one between us) was the property of the nymph or the swain in this dilemma. From me you shall never get the secret.

I am not much a friend to out-of-doors reading. I cannot settle my spirits to it. I knew a Unitarian minister, who was

generally to be seen upon Snow Hill (as yet Skinner's Street *was not*), between the hours of ten and eleven in the morning, studying a volume of Lardner. I own this to have been a strain of abstraction beyond my reach. I used to admire how 5 he sidled along, keeping clear of secular contacts. An illiterate encounter with a porter's knot, or a bread basket, would have quickly put to flight all the theology I am master of, and have left me worse than indifferent to the five points.

I was once amused — there is a pleasure in *affecting* affectation — at the indignation of a crowd that was jostling in with me at the pit-door of Covent Garden Theatre, to have a sight of Master Betty — then at once in his dawn and his meridian — in *Hamlet*. I had been invited, quite unexpectedly, to join a party, whom I met near the door of the play-house, 15 and I happened to have in my hand a large octavo of Johnson and Steevens's *Shakespeare*, which, the time not admitting of my carrying it home, of course went with me to the theatre. Just in the very heat and pressure of the doors opening — the *rush*, as they term it — I deliberately held the volume over 20 my head, open at the scene in which the young Roscius had been most cried up, and quietly read by the lamp-light. The clamour became universal. "The affectation of the fellow," cried one. "Look at that gentleman *reading*, papa," squeaked a young lady, who, in her admiration of the novelty, 25 almost forgot her fears. I read on. "He ought to have his book knocked out of his hand," exclaimed a pursy cit, whose arms were too fast pinioned to his side to suffer him to execute his kind intention. Still I read on — and, till the time came to pay my money, kept as unmoved as Saint Anthony 30 at his holy offices, with the satyrs, apes, and hobgoblins mopping and making mouths at him, in the picture, while the good man sits as undisturbed at the sight as if he were the sole tenant of the desert. — The individual rabble (I recognized more than one of their ugly faces) had damned a slight

piece of mine a few nights before, and I was determined the culprits should not a second time put me out of countenance.

There is a class of street-readers whom I can never contemplate without affection—the poor gentry, who, not having wherewithal to buy or hire a book, filch a little learning at the open stalls—the owner, with his hard eye, casting envious looks at them all the while, and thinking when they will have done. Venturing tenderly, page after page, expecting every moment when he shall interpose his interdict, and yet unable to deny themselves the gratification, they “snatch a fearful joy.” Martin B_____, in this way, by daily fragments, got through two volumes of Clarissa, when the stall-keeper damped his laudable ambition, by asking him (it was in his younger days) whether he meant to purchase the work. M. declares, that under no circumstances of his life did he ever peruse a book with half the satisfaction which he took in those uneasy snatches. A quaint poetess of our day has moralized upon this subject in two very touching but homely stanzas.

I saw a boy with eager eye
 Open a book upon a stall,
 And read as he 'd devour it all ;
 Which when the stall-man did espy,
 Soon to the boy I heard him call,
 ' You, sir, you never buy a book,
 Therefore in one you shall not look.' 20
 The boy pass'd slowly on, and with a sigh
 He wish'd he never had been taught to read,
 Then of the old churl's books he should have had no
 need.

Of sufferings the poor have many,
 Which never can the rich annoy : 30
 I soon perceived another boy,
 Who look'd as if he 'd not had any
 Food, for that day at least — enjoy

The sight of cold meat in a tavern larder.
 This boy's case, then thought I, is surely harder,
 Thus hungry, longing, thus without a penny,
 Beholding choice of dainty-dressed meat :
 No wonder if he wish he ne'er had learn'd to eat.

XXIII. OLD CHINA

I HAVE an almost feminine partiality for old china. When I go to see any great house, I inquire for the china-closet, and next for the picture-gallery. I cannot defend the order of preference, but by saying, that we have all some taste or 10 other, of too ancient a date to admit of our remembering distinctly that it was an acquired one. I can call to mind the first play and the first exhibition, that I was taken to ; but I am not conscious of a time when china jars and saucers were introduced into my imagination.

15 I had no repugnance then — why should I now have? — to those little lawless, azure-tinctured grotesques, that under the notion of men and women, float about, uncircumscribed by any element, in that world before perspective — a china tea-cup.

I like to see my old friends — whom distance cannot diminish — figuring up in the air (so they appear to our optics), yet on *terra firma* still — for so we must in courtesy interpret that speck of deeper blue, which the decorous artist, to prevent absurdity, has made to spring up beneath their sandals.

I love the men with women's faces, and the women, if 25 possible, with still more womanish expressions.

Here is a young and courtly Mandarin, handing tea to a lady from a salver — two miles off. See how distance seems to set off respect! And here the same lady, or another — for likeness is identity on tea-cups — is stepping into a little 30 fairy boat, moored on the hither side of this calm garden river, with a dainty mincing foot, which in a right angle of

incidence (as angles go in our world) must infallibly land her in the midst of a flowery mead — a furlong off on the other side of the same strange stream !

Farther on — if far or near can be predicated of their world — see horses, trees, pagodas, dancing the hays.

5

Here — a cow and rabbit couchant, and co-extensive — so objects show, seen through the lucid atmosphere of fine Cathay.

I was pointing out to my cousin last evening, over our Hyson (which we are old-fashioned enough to drink unmixed still of an afternoon), some of these *speciosa miracula* upon a 10 set of extraordinary old blue china (a recent purchase) which we were now for the first time using ; and could not help remarking, how favourable circumstances had been to us of late years, that we could afford to please the eye sometimes with trifles of this sort — when a passing sentiment seemed 15 to over-shade the brows of my companion. I am quick at detecting these summer clouds in Bridget.

“ I wish the good old times would come again,” she said, “ when we were not quite so rich. I do not mean, that I want to be poor ; but there was a middle state ; ” — so she 20 was pleased to ramble on, — “ in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a purchase, now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury (and, O ! how much ado I had to get you to consent in those times !) 25 we were used to have a debate two or three days before, and to weigh the *for* and *against*, and think what we might spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon, that should be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, when we felt the money that we paid for it.

30

“ Do you remember the brown suit, which you made to hang upon you, till all your friends cried shame upon you, it grew so threadbare, and all because of that folio Beaumont and Fletcher, which you dragged home late at night from

Barker's in Covent Garden? Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our minds to the purchase, and had not come to a determination till it was near ten o'clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from 5 Islington, fearing you should be too late — and when the old bookseller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures — and when you lugged it home, wishing it were twice as cumbersome — and when you presented it to me — and when we were exploring the perfectness of it (*collating* you called it) — and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste, which your impatience would not suffer to be left till daybreak — was there no pleasure in being a poor man? or can those neat black clothes 15 which you wear now, and are so careful to keep brushed, since we have become rich and finical, give you half the honest vanity, with which you flaunted it about in that overworn suit — your old corbeau — for four or five weeks longer than you should have done, to pacify your conscience for the mighty 20 sum of fifteen — or sixteen shillings was it? — a great affair we thought it then — which you had lavished on the old folio. Now you can afford to buy any book that pleases you, but I do not see that you ever bring me home any nice old purchases now.

25 "When you came home with twenty apologies for laying out a less number of shillings upon that print after Leonardo, which we christened the 'Lady Blanche'; when you looked at the purchase, and thought of the money — and thought of the money, and looked again at the picture — was there 30 no pleasure in being a poor man? Now, you have nothing to do but to walk into Colnaghi's, and buy a wilderness of Leonardos. Yet do you?

"Then, do you remember our pleasant walks to Enfield, and Potter's Bar, and Waltham, when we had a holiday —

holidays, and all other fun, are gone, now we are rich—and the little hand-basket in which I used to deposit our day's fare of savoury cold lamb and salad—and how you would pry about at noon tide for some decent house, where we might go in, and produce our store—only paying for the ale that you must call for—and speculate upon the looks of the landlady, and whether she was likely to allow us a table-cloth—and wish for such another honest hostess, as Izaak Walton has described many a one on the pleasant banks of the Lea, when he went a-fishing—and sometimes 10 they would prove obliging enough, and sometimes they would look grudgingly upon us—but we had cheerful looks still for one another, and would eat our plain food savourily, scarcely grudging Piscator his Trout Hall? Now, when we go out a day's pleasure, which is seldom moreover, we *ride* part 15 of the way—and go into a fine inn, and order the best of dinners, never debating the expense—which, after all, never has half the relish of those chance country snaps, when we were at the mercy of uncertain usage, and a precarious welcome.

“You are too proud to see a play anywhere now but in the pit. Do you remember where it was we used to sit, when we saw the Battle of Hexham, and the Surrender of Calais, and Bannister and Mrs. Bland in the Children in the Wood—when we squeezed out our shillings a-piece to sit three or four 25 times in a season in the one-shilling gallery—where you felt all the time that you ought not to have brought me—and more strongly I felt obligation to you for having brought me—and the pleasure was the better for a little shame—and when the curtain drew up, what cared we for our place in the house, or 30 what mattered it where we were sitting, when our thoughts were with Rosalind in Arden, or with Viola at the Court of Illyria? You used to say, that the gallery was the best place of all for enjoying a play socially—that the relish of such

exhibitions must be in proportion to the infrequency of going — that the company we met there, not being in general readers of plays, were obliged to attend the more, and did attend, to what was going on, on the stage — because a word lost would 5 have been a chasm, which it was impossible for them to fill up. With such reflections we consoled our pride then — and I appeal to you, whether, as a woman, I met generally with less attention and accommodation, than I have done since in more expensive situations in the house? The getting in indeed, and 10 the crowding up those inconvenient staircases, was bad enough, — but there was still a law of civility to women recognized to quite as great an extent as we ever found in the other passages — and how a little difficulty overcome heightened the snug seat, and the play afterwards! Now we can only pay our 15 money, and walk in. You cannot see, you say, in the galleries now. I am sure we saw, and heard too, well enough then — but sight, and all, I think, is gone with our poverty.

“There was pleasure in eating strawberries, before they became quite common — in the first dish of peas, while they 20 were yet dear — to have them for a nice supper, a treat. What treat can we have now? If we were to treat ourselves now — that is, to have dainties a little above our means, it would be selfish and wicked. It is the very little more that we allow ourselves beyond what the actual poor can get at, 25 that makes what I call a treat — when two people living together, as we have done, now and then indulge themselves in a cheap luxury, which both like; while each apologizes, and is willing to take both halves of the blame to his single share. I see no harm in people making much of themselves 30 in that sense of the word. It may give them a hint how to make much of others. But now — what I mean by the word — we never do make much of ourselves. None but the poor can do it. I do not mean the veriest poor of all, but persons as we were, just above poverty.

“I know what you were going to say, that it is mighty pleasant at the end of the year to make all meet—and much ado we used to have every Thirty-first Night of December to account for our exceedings—many a long face did you make over your puzzled accounts, and in contriving to make it out 5 how we had spent so much—or that we had not spent so much—or that it was impossible we should spend so much next year—and still we found our slender capital decreasing—but then, betwixt ways, and projects, and compromises of one sort or another, and talk of curtailing this charge, and 10 doing without that for the future—and the hope that youth brings, and laughing spirits (in which you were never poor till now), we pocketed up our loss, and in conclusion, with ‘lusty brimmers’ (as you used to quote it out of *hearty cheerful Mr. Cotton*, as you called him), we used to welcome in the 15 ‘coming guest.’ Now we have no reckoning at all at the end of the old year—no flattering promises about the new year doing better for us.”

Bridget is so sparing of her speech on most occasions, that when she gets into a rhetorical vein, I am careful how I interrupt it. I could not help, however, smiling at the phantom of wealth which her dear imagination had conjured up out of a clear income of poor—hundred pounds a year. “It is true we were happier when we were poorer, but we were also younger, my cousin. I am afraid we must put up with the 25 excess, for if we were to shake the superflux into the sea, we should not much mend ourselves. That we had much to struggle with, as we grew up together, we have reason to be most thankful. It strengthened, and knit our compact closer. We could never have been what we have been to each other, 30 if we had always had the sufficiency which you now complain of. The resisting power—those natural dilations of the youthful spirit, which circumstances cannot straiten—with us are long since passed away. Competence to age is

supplementary youth ; a sorry supplement indeed, but I fear the best that is to be had. We must ride where we formerly walked : live better and lie softer — and shall be wise to do so — than we had means to do in those good old days you 5 speak of. Yet could those days return — could you and I once more walk our thirty miles a-day — could Bannister and Mrs. Bland again be young, and you and I be young to see them — could the good old one-shilling gallery days return — they are dreams, my cousin, now — but could you and I 10 at this moment, instead of this quiet argument, by our well-carpeted fireside, sitting on this luxurious sofa — be once more struggling up those inconvenient staircases, pushed about, and squeezed, and elbowed by the poorest rabble of poor gallery scramblers — could I once more hear those 15 anxious shrieks of yours — and the delicious *Thank God, we are safe*, which always followed when the topmost stair, conquered, let in the first light of the whole cheerful theatre down beneath us — I know not the fathom line that ever touched a descent so deep as I would be willing to bury more 20 wealth in than Crœsus had, or the great Jew R — is supposed to have, to purchase it. And now do just look at that merry little Chinese waiter holding an umbrella, big enough for a bed-tester, over the head of that pretty insipid half-Madonna-ish chit of a lady in that very blue summer-house."

XXIV. POOR RELATIONS

25 A POOR relation — is the most irrelevant thing in nature, — a piece of impertinent correspondency, — an odious approximation, — a haunting conscience, — a preposterous shadow, lengthening in the noon-tide of your prosperity, — an unwelcome remembrancer, — a perpetually recurring mortification, — a drain on your purse, — a more intolerable dun

upon your pride,—a drawback upon success,—a rebuke to your rising,—a stain in your blood,—a blot on your 'scutcheon,—a rent in your garment,—a death's head at your banquet,—Agathocles' pot,—a Mordecai in your gate,—a Lazarus at your door,—a lion in your path,—a frog in your chamber,—a fly in your ointment,—a mote in your eye,—a triumph to your enemy,—an apology to your friends,—the one thing not needful,—the hail in harvest,—the ounce of sour in a pound of sweet. 5

He is known by his knock. Your heart telleth you "That 10 is Mr. ——." A rap, between familiarity and respect; that demands, and, at the same time, seems to despair of, entertainment. He entereth smiling, and — embarrassed. He holdeth out his hand to you to shake, and draweth it back again. He casually looketh in about dinner-time — when the 15 table is full. He offereth to go away, seeing you have company — but is induced to stay. He filleth a chair, and your visitor's two children are accommodated at a side table. He never cometh upon open days, when your wife says with some complacency, "My dear, perhaps Mr. —— will drop in 20 to-day." He remembereth birthdays — and professeth he is fortunate to have stumbled upon one. He declarereth against fish, the turbot being small — yet sufferereth himself to be importuned into a slice, against his first resolution. He sticketh by the port — yet will be prevailed upon to empty the 25 remainder glass of claret, if a stranger press it upon him. He is a puzzle to the servants, who are fearful of being too obsequious, or not civil enough, to him. The guests think "they have seen him before." Every one speculateth upon his condition; and the most part take him to be — a tide-waiter. 30 He calleth you by your Christian name, to imply that his other is the same with your own. He is too familiar by half, yet you wish he had less diffidence. With half the familiarity he might pass for a casual dependent; with more boldness he

would be in no danger of being taken for what he is. He is too humble for a friend, yet taketh on him more state than befits a client. He is a worse guest than a country tenant, inasmuch as he bringeth up no rent — yet 'tis odds, from his 5 garb and demeanour, that your guests take him for one. He is asked to make one at the whist table ; refuses on the score of poverty, and — resents being left out. When the company break up, he proffereth to go for a coach — and lets the servant go. He recollects your grandfather ; and will thrust 10 in some mean, and quite unimportant anecdote of — the family. He knew it when it was not quite so flourishing as "he is blest in seeing it now." He reviveth past situations, to institute what he calleth — favourable comparisons. With a reflecting sort of congratulation, he will inquire the price 15 of your furniture ; and insults you with a special commendation of your window-curtains. He is of opinion that the urn is the more elegant shape, but, after all, there was something more comfortable about the old tea-kettle — which you must remember. He dare say you must find a great convenience 20 in having a carriage of your own, and appealeth to your lady if it is not so. Inquireth if you have had your arms done on vellum yet ; and did not know till lately, that such-and-such had been the crest of the family. His memory is unseasonable ; his compliments perverse ; his talk a trouble ; his stay 25 pertinacious ; and when he goeth away, you dismiss his chair into a corner, as precipitately as possible, and feel fairly rid of two nuisances.

There is a worse evil under the sun, and that is — a female Poor Relation. You may do something with the other ; you 30 may pass him off tolerably well ; but your indigent she-relative is hopeless. "He is an old humourist," you may say, "and affects to go threadbare. His circumstances are better than folks would take them to be. You are fond of having a Character at your table, and truly he is one." But in the

indications of female poverty there can be no disguise. No woman dresses below herself from caprice. The truth must out without shuffling. "She is plainly related to the L——s; or what does she at their house?" She is, in all probability, your wife's cousin. Nine times out of ten, at least, this is the 5 case. Her garb is something between a gentlewoman and a beggar, yet the former evidently predominates. She is most provokingly humble, and ostentatiously sensible to her inferiority. He may require to be repressed sometimes — *ali- quando sufflaminandus erat* — but there is no raising her. 10 You send her soup at dinner, and she begs to be helped — after the gentlemen. Mr. — requests the honour of taking wine with her; she hesitates between Port and Madeira, and chooses the former — because he does. She calls the servant *Sir*; and insists on not troubling him to hold her plate. The 15 housekeeper patronizes her. The children's governess takes upon her to correct her, when she has mistaken the piano for a harpsichord.

Richard Amlet, Esq., in the play, is a notable instance of the disadvantages, to which this chimerical notion of *affinity* 20 *constituting a claim to acquaintance*, may subject the spirit of a gentleman. A little foolish blood is all that is betwixt him and a lady with a great estate. His stars are perpetually crossed by the malignant maternity of an old woman, who persists in calling him "her son Dick." But she has where- 25 withal in the end to recompense his indignities, and float him again upon the brilliant surface, under which it had been her seeming business and pleasure all along to sink him. All men, besides, are not of Dick's temperament. I knew an Amlet in real life, who, wanting Dick's buoyancy, sank indeed. Poor 30 W—— was of my own standing at Christ's, a fine classic, and a youth of promise. If he had a blemish, it was too much pride; but its quality was inoffensive; it was not of that sort which hardens the heart, and serves to keep inferiors at a

distance ; it only sought to ward off derogation from itself. It was the principle of self-respect carried as far as it could go, without infringing upon that respect which he would have every one else equally maintain for himself. He would have you to think alike with him on this topic. Many a quarrel have I had with him, when we were rather older boys, and our tallness made us more obnoxious to observation in the blue clothes, because I would not thread the alleys and blind ways of the town with him to elude notice, when we have been out together on a holiday in the streets of this sneering and prying metropolis. W—— went, sore with these notions, to Oxford, where the dignity and sweetness of a scholar's life, meeting with the alloy of a humble introduction, wrought in him a passionate devotion to the place, with a profound aversion from the society. The servitor's gown (worse than his school array) clung to him with Nessian venom. He thought himself ridiculous in a garb, under which Latimer must have walked erect ; and in which Hooker, in his young days, possibly flaunted in a vein of no discommendable vanity. In the depth of college shades, or in his lonely chamber, the poor student shrunk from observation. He found shelter among books, which insult not ; and studies, that ask no questions of a youth's finances. He was lord of his library, and seldom cared for looking out beyond his domains. The healing influence of studious pursuits was upon him, to soothe and to abstract. He was almost a healthy man ; when the waywardness of his fate broke out against him with a second and worse malignity. The father of W—— had hitherto exercised the humble profession of house-painter at N——, near Oxford. A supposed interest with some of the heads of colleges had now induced him to take up his abode in that city, with the hope of being employed upon some public works which were talked of. From that moment I read in the countenance of the young man, the determination which

at length tore him from academical pursuits for ever. To a person unacquainted with our Universities, the distance between the gownsmen and the townsmen, as they are called — the trading part of the latter especially — is carried to an excess that would appear harsh and incredible. The temperament of W——'s father was diametrically the reverse of his own. Old W—— was a little, busy, cringing tradesman, who, with his son upon his arm, would stand bowing and scraping, cap in hand, to anything that wore the semblance of a gown — insensible to the winks and opener remonstrances of the young man, to whose chamber-fellow, or equal in standing, perhaps, he was thus obsequiously and gratuitously ducking. Such a state of things could not last. W—— must change the air of Oxford or be suffocated. He chose the former ; and let the sturdy moralist, who strains the point of the filial duties as high as they can bear, censure the dereliction ; he cannot estimate the struggle. I stood with W——, the last afternoon I ever saw him, under the eaves of his paternal dwelling. It was in the fine lane leading from the High Street to the back of * * * * college, where W—— kept his rooms. He seemed thoughtful, and more reconciled. I ventured to rally him — finding him in a better mood — upon a representation of the Artist Evangelist, which the old man, whose affairs were beginning to flourish, had caused to be set up in a splendid sort of frame, over his really handsome shop, either as a token of prosperity, or badge of gratitude to his saint. W—— looked up at the Luke, and, like Satan, "knew his mounted sign — and fled." A letter on his father's table the next morning, announced that he had accepted a commission in a regiment about to embark for Portugal. He was among the first who perished before the walls of St. Sebastian.

I do not know how, upon a subject which I began with treating half seriously, I should have fallen upon a recital so eminently painful ; but this theme of poor relationship is

replete with so much matter for tragic, as well as comic associations, that it is difficult to keep the account distinct without blending. The earliest impressions which I received on this matter, are certainly not attended with anything 5 painful, or very humiliating, in the recalling. At my father's table (no very splendid one) was to be found, every Saturday, the mysterious figure of an aged gentleman clothed in neat black, of a sad yet comely appearance. His deportment was of the essence of gravity ; his words few or none ; and I was 10 not to make a noise in his presence. I had little inclination to have done so — for my cue was to admire in silence. A particular elbow-chair was appropriated to him, which was in no case to be violated. A peculiar sort of sweet pudding, which appeared on no other occasion, distinguished the days 15 of his coming. I used to think him a prodigiously rich man. All I could make out of him was, that he and my father had been schoolfellows a world ago at Lincoln, and that he came from the Mint. The Mint I knew to be a place where all the money was coined — and I thought he was the owner of 20 all that money. Awful ideas of the Tower twined themselves about his presence. He seemed above human infirmities and passions. A sort of melancholy grandeur invested him. From some inexplicable doom I fancied him obliged to go about in an eternal suit of mourning ; a captive — a stately 25 being, let out of the Tower on Saturdays. Often have I wondered at the temerity of my father, who, in spite of an habitual general respect which we all in common manifested towards him, would venture now and then to stand up against him in some argument, touching their youthful days. The 30 houses of the ancient city of Lincoln are divided (as most of my readers know) between the dwellers on the hill, and in the valley. This marked distinction formed an obvious division between the boys who lived above (however brought together in a common school) and the boys whose paternal

residence was on the plain ; a sufficient cause of hostility in the code of these young Grotiuses. My father had been a leading Mountaineer ; and would still maintain the general superiority, in skill and hardihood, of the *Above Boys* (his own faction) over the *Below Boys* (so were they called), of 5 which party his contemporary had been a chieftain. Many and hot were the skirmishes on this topic — the only one upon which the old gentleman was ever brought out — and bad blood bred ; even sometimes almost to the recommencement (so I expected) of actual hostilities. But my father, 10 who scorned to insist upon advantages, generally contrived to turn the conversation upon some adroit by-commendation of the old Minster ; in the general preference of which, before all other cathedrals in the island, the dweller on the hill, and the plain-born, could meet on a conciliating level, and lay 15 down their less important differences. Once only I saw the old gentleman really ruffled, and I remember with anguish the thought that came over me : “Perhaps he will never come here again.” He had been pressed to take another plate of the viand, which I have already mentioned as the 20 indispensable concomitant of his visits. He had refused, with a resistance amounting to rigour — when my aunt, an old Lincolnian, but who had something of this, in common with my cousin Bridget, that she would sometimes press civility out of season — uttered the following memorable application 25 — “Do take another slice, Mr. Billet, for you do not get pudding every day.” — The old gentleman said nothing at the time — but he took occasion in the course of the evening, when some argument had intervened between them, to utter with an emphasis which chilled the company, and which chills 30 me now as I write it — “Woman, you are superannuated.” John Billet did not survive long after the digesting of this affront ; but he survived long enough to assure me that peace was actually restored ! and, if I remember aright, another

pudding was discreetly substituted in the place of that which had occasioned the offence. He died at the Mint (Anno 1781) where he had long held, what he accounted, a comfortable independence ; and with five pounds, fourteen shillings, and 5 a penny, which were found in his escritoire after his decease, left the world, blessing God that he had enough to bury him, and that he had never been obliged to any man for a sixpence. This was — a Poor Relation.

XXV. THE OLD MARGATE HOY

I AM fond of passing my vacations (I believe I have said so 10 before) at one or other of the Universities. Next to these my choice would fix me at some woody spot, such as the neighbourhood of Henley affords in abundance, upon the banks of my beloved Thames. But somehow or other my cousin contrives to wheedle me once in three or four seasons to a watering-place. 15 Old attachments cling to her in spite of experience. We have been dull at Worthing one summer, duller at Brighton another, dullest at Eastbourne a third, and are at this moment doing dreary penance at — Hastings ! — and all because we were happy many years ago for a brief week at — Margate. That 20 was our first sea-side experiment, and many circumstances combined to make it the most agreeable holiday of my life. We had neither of us seen the sea, and we had never been from home so long together in company.

Can I forget thee, thou old Margate Hoy, with thy weather- 25 beaten sunburnt captain, and his rough accommodations — ill exchanged for the foppery and fresh-water niceness of the modern steam-packet? To the winds and waves thou committedst thy goodly freightage, and didst ask no aid of magic fumes, and spells, and boiling cauldrons. With the gales 30 of heaven thou wentest swimmingly ; or, when it was their

pleasure, stoodest still with sailor-like patience. Thy course was natural, not forced, as in a hotbed ; nor didst thou go poisoning the breath of ocean with sulphureous smoke — a great sea-chimera, chimneying and furnacing the deep ; or liker to that fire-god parching up Scamander.

Can I forget thy honest, yet slender crew, with their coy reluctant responses (yet to the suppression of anything like contempt) to the raw questions, which we of the great city would be ever and anon putting to them, as to the uses of this or that strange naval implement ? 'Specially can I forget thee, thou happy medium, thou shade of refuge between us and them, conciliating interpreter of their skill to our simplicity, comfortable ambassador between sea and land ! — whose sailor-trousers did not more convincingly assure thee to be an adopted denizen of the former, than thy white cap, and whiter apron over them, with thy neat-fingered practice in thy culinary vocation, bespoke thee to have been of inland nurture heretofore — a master cook of Eastcheap ? How busily didst thou ply thy multifarious occupation, cook, mariner, attendant, chamberlain ; here, there, like another Ariel, flaming at once about all parts of the deck, yet with kindlier ministrations — not to assist the tempest, but, as if touched with a kindred sense of our infirmities, to soothe the qualms which that untried motion might haply raise in our crude land-fancies. And when the o'er-washing billows drove us below deck (for it was far gone in October, and we had stiff and blowing weather) how did thy officious ministerings, still catering for our comfort, with cards, and cordials, and thy more cordial conversation, alleviate the closeness and the confinement of thy else (truth to say) not very savoury, nor very inviting, little cabin !

With these additaments to boot, we had on board a fellow-passenger, whose discourse in verity might have beguiled a longer voyage than we meditated, and have made mirth and wonder abound as far as the Azores. He was a dark, Spanish

complexioned young man, remarkably handsome, with an officer-like assurance, and an insuppressible volubility of assertion. He was, in fact, the greatest liar I had met with then, or since. He was none of your hesitating, half story-tellers 5 (a most painful description of mortals) who go on sounding your belief, and only giving you as much as they see you can swallow at a time — the nibbling pickpockets of your patience — but one who committed downright, daylight depredations upon his neighbour's faith. He did not stand shivering upon 10 the brink, but was a hearty thorough-paced liar, and plunged at once into the depths of your credulity. I partly believe, he made pretty sure of his company. Not many rich, not many wise, or learned, composed at that time the common stowage of a Margate packet. We were, I am afraid, a set of 15 as unseasoned Londoners (let our enemies give it a worse name) as Aldermanbury, or Watling Street, at that time of day could have supplied. There might be an exception or two among us, but I scorn to make any invidious distinctions among such a jolly, companionable ship's company, as those were whom 20 I sailed with. Something too must be conceded to the *Genius Loci*. Had the confident fellow told us half the legends on land, which he favoured us with on the other element, I flatter myself the good sense of most of us would have revolted. But we were in a new world, with everything unfamiliar about 25 us, and the time and place disposed us to the reception of any prodigious marvel whatsoever. Time has obliterated from my memory much of his wild fablings ; and the rest would appear but dull, as written, and to be read on shore. He had been Aide-de-camp (among other rare accidents and fortunes) to a 30 Persian prince, and at one blow had stricken off the head of the King of Carmania on horseback. He, of course, married the Prince's daughter. I forget what unlucky turn in the politics of that court, combining with the loss of his consort, was the reason of his quitting Persia ; but with the rapidity of a

magician he transported himself, along with his hearers, back to England, where we still found him in the confidence of great ladies. There was some story of a Princess — Elizabeth, if I remember — having intrusted to his care an extraordinary casket of jewels, upon some extraordinary occasion — but as I am 5 not certain of the name or circumstance at this distance of time, I must leave it to the Royal daughters of England to settle the honour among themselves in private. I cannot call to mind half his pleasant wonders ; but I perfectly remember, that in the course of his travels he had seen a *phœnix* ; and he 10 obligingly undeceived us of the vulgar error, that there is but one of that species at a time, assuring us that they were not uncommon in some parts of Upper Egypt. Hitherto he had found the most implicit listeners. His dreaming fancies had transported us beyond the “ignorant present.” But when (still 15 hardying more and more in his triumphs over our simplicity) he went on to affirm that he had actually sailed through the legs of the Colossus at Rhodes, it really became necessary to make a stand. And here I must do justice to the good sense and intrepidity of one of our party, a youth, that had hitherto been 20 one of his most deferential auditors, who, from his recent reading, made bold to assure the gentleman, that there must be some mistake, as “the Colossus in question had been destroyed long since : ” to whose opinion, delivered with all modesty, our hero was obliging enough to concede thus much, that “the figure 25 was indeed a little damaged.” This was the only opposition he met with, and it did not at all seem to stagger him, for he proceeded with his fables, which the same youth appeared to swallow with still more complacency than ever, — confirmed, as it were, by the extreme candour of that concession. With 30 these prodigies he wheedled us on till we came in sight of the Reculvers, which one of our own company (having been the voyage before) immediately recognizing, and pointing out to us, was considered by us as no ordinary seaman.

All this time sat upon the edge of the deck quite a different character. It was a lad, apparently very poor, very infirm, and very patient. His eye was ever on the sea, with a smile : and, if he caught now and then some snatches of these wild legends, 5 it was by accident, and they seemed not to concern him. The waves to him whispered more pleasant stories. He was as one, being with us, but not of us. He heard the bell of dinner ring without stirring ; and when some of us pulled out our private stores — our cold meat and our salads — he produced none, 10 and seemed to want none. Only a solitary biscuit he had laid in ; provision for the one or two days and nights, to which these vessels then were oftentimes obliged to prolong their voyage. Upon a nearer acquaintance with him, which he seemed neither to court nor decline, we learned that he was going to Margate, 15 with the hope of being admitted into the Infirmary there for sea-bathing. His disease was a scrofula, which appeared to have eaten all over him. He expressed great hopes of a cure ; and when we asked him, whether he had any friends where he was going, he replied, “he *had* no friends.”

20 These pleasant, and some mournful passages, with the first sight of the sea, co-operating with youth, and a sense of holidays, and out-of-door adventure, to me that had been pent up in populous cities for many months before, — have left upon my mind the fragrance as of summer days gone by, bequeathing 25 nothing but their remembrance for cold and wintry hours to chew upon.

Will it be thought a digression (it may spare some unwelcome comparisons), if I endeavour to account for the *dissatisfaction* which I have heard so many persons confess to have 30 felt (as I did myself feel in part on this occasion), *at the sight of the sea for the first time?* I think the reason usually given — referring to the incapacity of actual objects for satisfying our preconceptions of them — scarcely goes deep enough into the question. Let the same person see a lion, an elephant, a

mountain, for the first time in his life, and he shall perhaps feel himself a little mortified. The things do not fill up that space, which the idea of them seemed to take up in his mind. But they have still a correspondency to his first notion, and in time grow up to it, so as to produce a very similar impression : 5 enlarging themselves (if I may say so) upon familiarity. But the sea remains a disappointment. — Is it not, that in *the latter* we had expected to behold (absurdly, I grant, but, I am afraid, by the law of imagination unavoidably) not a definite object, as those wild beasts, or that mountain compassable by the eye, 10 but *all the sea at once*, THE COMMENSURATE ANTAGONIST OF THE EARTH? I do not say we tell ourselves so much, but the craving of the mind is to be satisfied with nothing less. I will suppose the case of a young person of fifteen (as I then was) knowing nothing of the sea, but from description. He comes 15 to it for the first time — all that he has been reading of it all his life, and *that* the most enthusiastic part of life, — all he has gathered from narratives of wandering seamen ; what he has gained from true voyages, and what he cherishes as credulously from romance and poetry ; crowding their images, and exact- 20 ing strange tributes from expectation. — He thinks of the great deep, and of those who go down unto it ; of its thousand isles, and of the vast continents it washes ; of its receiving the mighty Plata, or Orellana, into its bosom, without disturbance, or sense of augmentation ; of Biscay swells, and the mariner 25

For many a day, and many a dreadful night,
Incessant labouring round the stormy Cape ;

of fatal rocks, and the “ still-vexed Bermoothes ; ” of great whirlpools, and the water-spout ; of sunken ships, and sunless treasures swallowed up in the unrestoring depths ; of fishes and 30 quaint monsters, to which all that is terrible on earth —

Be but as bugs to frighten babes withal,
Compared with the creatures in the sea’s entral ;

of naked savages, and Juan Fernandez ; of pearls, and shells ; of coral beds, and of enchanted isles ; of mermaids' grots —

I do not assert that in sober earnest he expects to be shown all these wonders at once, but he is under the tyranny of a mighty faculty, which haunts him with confused hints and shadows of all these ; and when the actual object opens first upon him, seen (in tame weather too most likely) from our unromantic coasts — a speck, a slip of sea-water, as it shows to him — what can it prove but a very unsatisfying and even diminutive entertainment ? Or if he has come to it from the mouth of a river, was it much more than the river widening ? and, even out of sight of land, what had he but a flat watery horizon about him, nothing comparable to the vast o'er-curtaining sky, his familiar object, seen daily without dread or amazement ? — Who, in similar circumstances, has not been tempted to exclaim with Charoba, in the poem of Gebir, —

Is this the mighty ocean ? — is this *all* ?

I love town, or country ; but this detestable Cinque Port is neither. I hate these scrubbed shoots, thrusting out their starved foliage from between the horrid fissures of dusty innumerable rocks ; which the amateur calls “ verdure to the edge of the sea.” I require woods, and they show me stunted coppices. I cry out for the water-brooks, and pant for fresh streams, and inland murmurs. I cannot stand all day on the naked beach, watching the capricious hues of the seas, shifting like the colours of a dying mullet. I am tired of looking out at the windows of this island-prison. I would fain retire into the interior of my cage. While I gaze upon the sea, I want to be on it, over it, across it. It binds me in with chains, as of iron. My thoughts are abroad. I should not so feel in Staffordshire. There is no home for me here. There is no sense of home at Hastings. It is a place of fugitive resort, an heterogeneous assemblage of sea-mews and stockbrokers,

Amphitrites of the town, and misses that coquet with the Ocean. If it were what it was in its primitive shape, and what it ought to have remained, a fair honest fishing-town, and no more, it were something — with a few straggling fishermen's huts scattered about, artless as its cliffs, and with their materials filched from them, it were something. I could abide to dwell with Meschek ; to assort with fisher-swains, and smugglers. There are, or I dream there are, many of this latter occupation here. Their faces become the place. I like a smuggler. He is the only honest thief. He robs nothing 10 but the revenue, — an abstraction I never greatly cared about. I could go out with them in their mackerel boats, or about their less ostensible business, with some satisfaction. I can even tolerate these poor victims to monotony, who from day to day pace along the beach, in endless progress and recurrence, to watch their illicit countrymen — townsfolk or brethren perchance — whistling to the sheathing and unsheathing of their cutlasses (their only solace), who under the mild name of preventive service, keep up a legitimated civil warfare in the deplorable absence of a foreign one, to show their detes- 15 tation of run hollands, and zeal for old England. But it is the visitants from town that come here to *say* that they have been here, with no more relish of the sea than a pond perch, or a dace might be supposed to have, that are my aversion. I feel like a foolish dace in these regions, and have as little toleration 20 for myself here, as for them. What can they want here? if they had a true relish of the ocean, why have they brought all this land luggage with them? or why pitch their civilized tents in the desert? What mean these scanty book-rooms — marine libraries as they entitle them — if the sea were, as they would 25 have us believe, a book “to read strange matter in?” what are their foolish concert-rooms, if they come, as they would fain be thought to do, to listen to the music of the waves? All is false and hollow pretension. They come, because it is the

fashion, and to spoil the nature of the place. They are mostly, as I have said, stock-brokers ; but I have watched the better sort of them — now and then, an honest citizen (of the old stamp), in the simplicity of his heart, shall bring down his wife 5 and daughters, to taste the sea breezes. I always know the date of their arrival. It is easy to see it in their countenance. A day or two they go wandering on the shingles, picking up cockle-shells, and thinking them great things ; but, in a poor week, imagination slackens : they begin to discover that cockles 10 produce no pearls, and then — O then ! — if I could interpret for the pretty creatures (I know they have not the courage to confess it themselves) how gladly would they exchange their sea-side rambles for a Sunday walk on the green-sward of their accustomed Twickenham meadows !

15 I would ask of one of these sea-charmed emigrants, who think they truly love the sea, with its wild usages, what would their feelings be, if some of the unsophisticated aborigines of this place, encouraged by their courteous questionings here, should venture, on the faith of such assured sympathy between 20 them, to return the visit, and come up to see — London. I must imagine them with their fishing-tackle on their back, as we carry our town necessaries. What a sensation would it cause in Lothbury ! What vehement laughter would it not excite among

25 The daughters of Cheapside, and wives of Lombard Street !

I am sure that no town-bred, or inland-born subjects, can feel their true and natural nourishment at these sea-places. Nature, where she does not mean us for mariners and vagabonds, bids us stay at home. The salt foam seems to nourish 30 a spleen. I am not half so good-natured as by the milder waters of my natural river. I would exchange these sea-gulls for swans, and scud a swallow for ever about the banks of Thamesis.

XXVI. BLAKESMOOR IN H—SHIRE

I do not know a pleasure more affecting than to range at will over the deserted apartments of some fine old family mansion. The traces of extinct grandeur admit of a better passion than envy: and contemplations on the great and good, whom we fancy in succession to have been its inhabitants, weave for us illusions, incompatible with the bustle of modern occupancy, and vanities of foolish present aristocracy. The same difference of feeling, I think, attends us between entering an empty and a crowded church. In the latter it is chance but some present human frailty—an act of inattention on the part of some of the auditory—or a trait of affectation, or worse, vain-glory, on that of the preacher—puts us by our best thoughts, disharmonizing the place and the occasion. But would'st thou know the beauty of holiness?—go alone on some week-day, borrowing the keys of 15 good Master Sexton, traverse the cool aisles of some country church: think of the piety that has kneeled there—the congregations, old and young, that have found consolation there—the meek pastor—the docile parishioner. With no disturbing emotions, no cross conflicting comparisons, drink in 20 the tranquillity of the place, till thou thyself become as fixed and motionless as the marble effigies that kneel and weep around thee.

Journeying northward lately, I could not resist going some few miles out of my road to look upon the remains of an old 25 great house with which I had been impressed in this way in infancy. I was apprised that the owner of it had lately pulled it down; still I had a vague notion that it could not all have perished, that so much solidity with magnificence could not have been crushed all at once into the mere dust and rubbish 30 which I found it.

The work of ruin had proceeded with a swift hand indeed, and the demolition of a few weeks had reduced it to—an antiquity.

I was astonished at the indistinction of everything. Where had 5 stood the great gates? What bounded the courtyard? Where-about did the out-houses commence? a few bricks only lay as representatives of that which was so stately and so spacious.

Death does not shrink up his human victim at this rate. The burnt ashes of a man weigh more in their proportion.

10 Had I seen these brick-and-mortar knaves at their process of destruction, at the plucking of every panel I should have felt the varlets at my heart. I should have cried out to them to spare a plank at least out of the cheerful store-room, in whose hot window-seat I used to sit and read Cowley, with the 15 grass-plat before, and the hum and flappings of that one solitary wasp that ever haunted it about me—it is in mine ears now, as oft as summer returns; or a panel of the yellow room.

Why, every plank and panel of that house for me had magic in it. The tapestried bedrooms—tapestry so much better 20 than painting—not adorning merely, but peopling the wainscots—at which childhood ever and anon would steal and look, shifting its coverlid (replaced as quickly) to exercise its tender courage in a momentary eye-encounter with those stern bright visages, staring reciprocally—all Ovid on the walls, in 25 colours vider than his descriptions. Actæon in mid sprout, with the unappeasable prudery of Diana; and the still more provoking, and almost culinary coolness of Dan Phœbus, eel-fashion, deliberately divesting of Marsyas.

Then, that haunted room—in which old Mrs. Battle died—30 whereinto I have crept, but always in the daytime, with a passion of fear; and a sneaking curiosity, terror-tainted, to hold communication with the past.—*How shall they build it up again?*

It was an old deserted place, yet not so long deserted but that traces of the splendour of past inmates were everywhere

apparent. Its furniture was still standing—even to the tarnished gilt leather battledores, and crumbling feathers of shuttle-cocks in the nursery, which told that children had once played there. But I was a lonely child, and had the range at will of every apartment, knew every nook and corner, wondered and 5 worshipped everywhere.

The solitude of childhood is not so much the mother of thought, as it is the feeder of love, and silence and admiration. So strange a passion for the place possessed me in those years, that, though there lay—I shame to say how few rods distant 10 from the mansion—half hid by trees, what I judged some romantic lake, such was the spell which bound me to the house, and such my carefulness not to pass its strict and proper precincts, that the idle waters lay unexplored for me; and not till late in life, curiosity prevailing over elder devotion, I found, to my astonishment, a pretty brawling brook had been the *Lacus Incognitus* of my infancy. Variegated views, extensive prospects—and those at no great distance from the house—I was told of such—what were they to me, being out of the boundaries of my *Eden*?—So far from a wish to 20 roam, I would have drawn, methought, still closer the fences of my chosen prison; and have been hemmed in by a yet securer cincture of those excluding garden walls. I could have exclaimed with that garden-loving poet—

Bind me, ye woodbines, in your twines ;
 Curl me about, ye gadding vines ;
 And oh so close your circles lace,
 That I may never leave this place ;
 But, lest your fetters prove too weak,
 Ere I your silken bondage break,
 Do you, O brambles, chain me too,
 And, courteous briars, nail me through.¹

25

30

¹ Marvell on Appleton House, to the Lord Fairfax.

I was here as in a lonely temple. Snug firesides — the low-built roof — parlours ten feet by ten — frugal boards, and all the homeliness of home — these were the condition of my birth — the wholesome soil which I was planted in. Yet, without 5 impeachment to their tenderest lessons, I am not sorry to have had glances of something beyond ; and to have taken, if but a peep, in childhood, at the contrasting accidents of a great fortune.

To have the feeling of gentility, it is not necessary to have 10 been born gentle. The pride of ancestry may be had on cheaper terms than to be obliged to an importunate race of ancestors ; and the coatless antiquary in his unemblazoned cell, revolving the long line of a Mowbray's or De Clifford's pedigree, at those sounding names may warm himself into as 15 gay a vanity as those who do inherit them. The claims of birth are ideal merely, and what herald shall go about to strip me of an idea? Is it trenchant to their swords? can it be hacked off as a spur can? or torn away like a tarnished garter?

What, else, were the families of the great to us? what 20 pleasure should we take in their tedious genealogies, or their capitulatory brass monuments? What to us the uninterrupted current of their bloods, if our own did not answer within us to a cognate and correspondent elevation.

Or wherefore, else, O tattered and diminished 'Scutcheon 25 that hung upon the time-worn walls of thy princely stairs, BLAKESMOOR ! have I in childhood so oft stood poring upon thy mystic characters — thy emblematic supporters, with their prophetic "Resurgam" — till, every dreg of peasantry purging off, I received into myself Very Gentility? Thou wert first in 30 my morning eyes ; and of nights, hast detained my steps from bedward, till it was but a step from gazing at thee to dreaming on thee.

This is the only true gentry by adoption ; the veritable change of blood, and not, as empirics have fabled, by transfusion.

Who it was by dying that had earned the splendid trophy, I knew not, I inquired not; but its fading rags, and colours cobweb-stained, told that its subject was of two centuries back.

And what if my ancestor at that date was some *Damoetas* — feeding flocks, not his own, upon the hills of Lincoln — did I in less earnest vindicate to myself the family trappings of this once proud *Ægon*? — repaying by a backward triumph the insults he might possibly have heaped in his lifetime upon my poor pastoral progenitor. 10

If it were presumption so to speculate, the present owners of the mansion had least reason to complain. They had long forsaken the old house of their fathers for a newer trifle; and I was left to appropriate to myself what images I could pick up, to raise my fancy, or to soothe my vanity. 15

I was the true descendant of those old W—s; and not the present family of that name, who had fled the old waste places.

Mine was that gallery of good old family portraits, which as I have gone over, giving them in fancy my own family name, 20 one — and then another — would seem to smile, reaching forward from the canvas, to recognize the new relationship; while the rest looked grave, as it seemed, at the vacancy in their dwelling, and thoughts of fled posterity.

That Beauty with the cool blue pastoral drapery, and a 25 lamb — that hung next the great bay window — with the bright yellow H—shire hair, and eye of watchet hue — so like my Alice! — I am persuaded she was a true Elia — Mildred Elia, I take it.

[From her, and from my passion for her — for I first learned 30 love from a picture — Bridget took the hint of those pretty whimsical lines, which thou mayst see, if haply thou hast never seen them, Reader, in the margin. But my Mildred grew not old, like the imaginary Helen.]

Mine too, BLAKESMOOR, was thy noble Marble Hall, with its mosaic pavements, and its Twelve Cæsars—stately busts in marble—ranged round: of whose countenances, young reader of faces as I was, the frowning beauty of Nero, I remember, had most of my wonder; but the mild Galba had my love. There they stood in the coldness of death, yet freshness of immortality.

Mine too, thy lofty Justice Hall, with its one chair of authority, high-backed and wickered, once the terror of luckless poacher, or self-forgetful maiden—so common since, that bats have roosted in it.

Mine too—whose else?—thy costly fruit-garden, with its sun-baked southern wall; the ampler pleasure-garden, rising backwards from the house in triple terraces, with flower-pots now of palest lead, save that a speck here and there, saved from the elements, bespeak their pristine state to have been gilt and glittering; the verdant quarters backwarder still; and, stretching still beyond, in old formality, thy firry wilderness, the haunt of the squirrel, and the day-long murmuring wood-pigeon, with that antique image in the centre, God or Goddess I wist not; but child of Athens or old Rome paid never a sincerer worship to Pan or to Sylvanus in their native groves, than I to that fragmental mystery.

Was it for this, that I kissed my childish hands too fervently in your idol worship, walks and windings of BLAKESMOOR! for this, or what sin of mine, has the plough passed over your pleasant places? I sometimes think that as men, when they die, do not die all, so of their extinguished habitations there may be a hope—a germ to be revivified.

XXVII. CAPTAIN JACKSON

AMONG the deaths of our obituary for this month, I observe with concern "At his cottage on the Bath road, Captain Jackson." The name and attribution are common enough; but a feeling like reproach persuades me, that this could have been no other in fact than my dear old friend, who some five-and-twenty years ago rented a tenement, which he was pleased to dignify with the appellation here used, about a mile from Westbourne Green. Alack, how good men, and the good turns they do us, slide out of memory, and are recalled but by the surprise of some such sad memento as that which now lies 10 before us !

He whom I mean was a retired half-pay officer, with a wife and two grown-up daughters, whom he maintained with the port and notions of gentlewomen upon that slender professional allowance. Comely girls they were too. 15

And was I in danger of forgetting this man? — his cheerful suppers — the noble tone of hospitality, when first you set your foot in *the cottage* — the anxious ministerings about you, where little or nothing (God knows) was to be ministered. — Althea's horn in a poor platter — the power of self-enchantment, by 20 which, in his magnificent wishes to entertain you, he multiplied his means to bounties.

You saw with your bodily eyes indeed what seemed a bare scrag — cold savings from the foregone meal — remnant hardly sufficient to send a mendicant from the door contented. But in the copious will — the revelling imagination of your host — the "mind, the mind, Master Shallow," whole beeves were spread before you — hecatombs — no end appeared to the profusion. 25

It was the widow's cruse — the loaves and fishes; carving 30 could not lessen nor helping diminish it — the stamina were

left—the elemental bone still flourished, divested of its accidents.

“Let us live while we can,” methinks I hear the open-handed creature exclaim; “while we have, let us not want,” 5 “here is plenty left;” “want for nothing”—with many more such hospitable sayings, the spurs of appetite, and old concomitants of smoking boards, and feast-oppressed chargers. Then sliding a slender ratio of Single Gloucester upon his wife’s plate, or the daughter’s, he would convey the remnant 10 rind into his own, with a merry quirk of “the nearer the bone,” &c., and declaring that he universally preferred the outside. For we had our table distinctions, you are to know, and some of us in a manner sate above the salt. None but his guest or guests dreamed of tasting flesh luxuries at night, 15 the fragments were *verè hospitibus sacra*. But of one thing or another there was always enough, and leavings: only he would sometimes finish the remainder crust, to show that he wished no savings.

Wine we had none; nor, except on very rare occasions, 20 spirits; but the sensation of wine was there. Some thin kind of ale I remember—“British beverage,” he would say! “Push about, my boys;” “Drink to your sweethearts, girls.” At every meagre draught a toast must ensue, or a song. All the forms of good liquor were there, with none of the effects wanting. Shut your eyes, and you would swear a capacious bowl 25 of punch was foaming in the centre, with beams of generous Port or Madeira radiating to it from each of the table corners. You got flustered, without knowing whence; tipsy upon words; and reeled under the potency of his unperforming 30 Bacchanalian encouragements.

We had our songs—“Why, Soldiers, Why”—and the “British Grenadiers”—in which last we were all obliged to bear chorus. Both the daughters sang. Their proficiency was a nightly theme—the masters he had given them—the

“no-expense” which he spared to accomplish them in a science “so necessary to young women.” But then — they could not sing “without the instrument.”

Sacred, and by me, never-to-be-violated, *Secrets of Poverty* ! Should I disclose your honest aims at grandeur, your make-shift efforts of magnificence? Sleep, sleep, with all thy broken keys, if one of the bunch be extant; thrummed by a thousand ancestral thumbs; dear cracked spinnet of dearer Louisa ! Without mention of mine, be dumb, thou thin accompanier of her thinner warble ! A veil be spread over 10 the dear delighted face of the well-deluded father, who now haply listening to cherubic notes, scarce feels sincerer pleasure than when she awakened thy time-shaken chords responsive to the twitterings of that slender image of a voice.

We were not without our literary talk either. It did not 15 extend far, but as far as it went, it was good. It was bottomed well; had good grounds to go upon. In *the cottage* was a room, which tradition authenticated to have been the same in which Glover, in his occasional retirements, had penned the greater part of his *Leonidas*. This circumstance was nightly 20 quoted, though none of the present inmates, that I could discover, appeared ever to have met with the poem in question. But that was no matter. Glover had written there, and the anecdote was pressed into the account of the family importance. It diffused a learned air through the apartment, 25 the little side casement of which (the poet’s study window), opening upon a superb view as far as to the pretty spire of Harrow, over domains and patrimonial acres, not a rood nor square yard whereof our host could call his own, yet gave occasion to an immoderate expansion of — vanity shall I call 30 it? — in his bosom, as he showed them in a glowing summer evening. It was all his, he took it all in, and communicated rich portions of it to his guests. It was a part of his largess, his hospitality; it was going over his grounds; he was lord

for the time of showing them, and you the implicit lookers-up to his magnificence.

He was a juggler, who threw mists before your eyes — you had no time to detect his fallacies. He would say “hand me 5 the *silver* sugar tongs ;” and, before you could discover it was a single spoon, and that *plated*, he would disturb and captivate your imagination by a misnomer of “the urn” for a tea-kettle ; or by calling a homely bench a sofa. Rich men direct you to their furniture, poor ones divert you from it ; he neither 10 did one nor the other, but by simply assuming that everything was handsome about him, you were positively at a demur what you did, or did not see, at *the cottage*. With nothing to live on, he seemed to live on everything. He had a stock of wealth in his mind ; not that which is properly termed *Content*, 15 for in truth he was not to be *contained* at all, but overflowed all bounds by the force of a magnificent self-delusion.

Enthusiasm is catching ; and even his wife, a sober native of North Britain, who generally saw things more as they were, was not proof against the continual collision of his credulity. 20 Her daughters were rational and discreet young women ; in the main, perhaps, not insensible to their true circumstances. I have seen them assume a thoughtful air at times. But such was the preponderating opulence of his fancy, that I am persuaded, not for any half-hour together, did they ever look their 25 own prospects fairly in the face. There was no resisting the vortex of his temperament. His riotous imagination conjured up handsome settlements before their eyes, which kept them up in the eye of the world too, and seem at last to have realized themselves ; for they both have married since, I am told, more 30 than respectably.

It is long since, and my memory waxes dim on some subjects, or I should wish to convey some notion of the manner in which the pleasant creature described the circumstances of his own wedding-day. I faintly remember something of a chaise and

four, in which he made his entry into Glasgow on that morning to fetch the bride home, or carry her thither, I forget which. It so completely made out the stanza of the old ballad —

When we came down through Glasgow town,
We were a comely sight to see ;
My love was clad in black velvet,
And I myself in cramasie.

5

I suppose it was the only occasion, upon which his own actual splendour at all corresponded with the world's notions on that subject. In homely cart, or travelling caravan, by whatever humble vehicle they chanced to be transported in less prosperous days, the ride through Glasgow came back upon his fancy, not as a humiliating contrast, but as a fair occasion for reverting to that one day's state. It seemed an "equipage étern" from which no power of fate or fortune, once mounted, ¹⁰ had power thereafter to dislodge him.

There is some merit in putting a handsome face upon indigent circumstances. To bully and swagger away the sense of them before strangers, may not be always discommendable. Tibbs, and Bobadil, even when detected, have more of our ²⁰ admiration than contempt. But for a man to put the cheat upon himself; to play the Bobadil at home; and, steeped in poverty up to the lips, to fancy himself all the while chin-deep in riches, is a strain of constitutional philosophy, and a mastery over fortune, which was reserved for my old friend Captain ²⁵ Jackson.

XXVIII. BARBARA S—

ON the noon of the 14th of November, 1743 or 4, I forget which it was, just as the clock had struck one, Barbara S—, with her accustomed punctuality, ascended the long rambling staircase, with awkward interposed landing-places, which led ³⁰

to the office, or rather a sort of box with a desk in it, whereat sat the then Treasurer of (what few of our readers may remember) the old Bath Theatre. All over the island it was the custom, and remains so I believe to this day, for the players 5 to receive their weekly stipend on the Saturday. It was not much that Barbara had to claim.

This little maid had just entered her eleventh year ; but her important station at the theatre, as it seemed to her, with the benefits which she felt to accrue from her pious application of 10 her small earnings, had given an air of womanhood to her steps and to her behaviour. You would have taken her to have been at least five years older.

Till latterly she had merely been employed in choruses, or where children were wanted to fill up the scene. But the 15 manager, observing a diligence and adroitness in her above her age, had for some few months past entrusted to her the performance of whole parts. You may guess the self-consequence of the promoted Barbara. She had already drawn tears in young Arthur ; had rallied Richard with infantine petulance 20 in the Duke of York ; and in her turn had rebuked that petulance when she was Prince of Wales. She would have done the elder child in Morton's pathetic after-piece to the life ; but as yet the *Children in the Wood* was not.

Long after this little girl was grown an aged woman, I 25 have seen some of these small parts, each making two or three pages at most, copied out in the rudest hand of the then prompter, who doubtless transcribed a little more carefully and fairly for the grown-up tragedy ladies of the establishment.

But such as they were, blotted and scrawled, as for a child's 30 use, she kept them all ; and in the zenith of her after-reputation it was a delightful sight to behold them bound up in costliest Morocco, each single—each small part making a book—with fine clasps, gilt splashed, &c. She had conscientiously kept them as they had been delivered to her ; not a

blot had been effaced or tampered with. They were precious to her for their affecting remembrancings. They were her principia, her rudiments; the elementary atoms; the little steps by which she pressed forward to perfection. "What," she would say, "could india-rubber, or a pumice stone, have 5 done for these darlings?"

I am in no hurry to begin my story—indeed I have little or none to tell—so I will just mention an observation of hers connected with that interesting time.

Not long before she died, I had been discoursing with her 10 on the quantity of real present emotion which a great tragic performer experiences during acting. I ventured to think, that though in the first instance such players must have possessed the feelings which they so powerfully called up in others, yet by frequent repetition those feelings must become deadened 15 in great measure, and the performer trust to the memory of past emotion, rather than express a present one. She indignantly repelled the notion, that with a truly great tragedian the operation, by which such effects were produced upon an audience, could ever degrade itself into what was purely 20 mechanical. With much delicacy, avoiding to instance in her *self* experience, she told me, that so long ago as when she used to play the part of the Little Son to Mrs. Porter's Isabella (I think it was), when that impressive actress has been bending over her in some heart-rending colloquy, she has felt real 25 hot tears come trickling from her, which (to use her powerful expression) have perfectly scalded her back.

I am not quite so sure that it was Mrs. Porter; but it was some great actress of that day. The name is indifferent; but the fact of the scalding tears I most distinctly remember. 30

I was always fond of the society of players, and am not sure that an impediment in my speech (which certainly kept me out of the pulpit) even more than certain personal disqualifications, which are often got over in that profession, did not

prevent me at one time of life from adopting it. I have had the honour (I must ever call it) once to have been admitted to the tea-table of Miss Kelly. I have played at serious whist with Mr. Liston. I have chatted with ever good-humoured 5 Mrs. Charles Kemble. I have conversed as friend to friend with her accomplished husband. I have been indulged with a classical conference with Macready; and with a sight of the Player-picture gallery, at Mr. Matthews's, when the kind owner, to remunerate me for my love of the old actors (whom he 10 loves so much), went over it with me, supplying to his capital collection, what alone the artist could not give them — voice; and their living motion. Old tones, half-faded, of Dodd and Parsons and Baddeley, have lived again for me at his bidding. Only Edwin he could not restore to me. I have supped with 15 —; but I am growing a coxcomb.

As I was about to say — at the desk of the then treasurer of the old Bath Theatre — not Diamond's — presented herself the little Barbara S—.

The parents of Barbara had been in reputable circumstances. 20 The father had practised, I believe, as an apothecary in the town. But his practice from causes which I feel my own infirmity too sensibly that way to arraign — or perhaps from that pure infelicity which accompanies some people in their walk through life, and which it is impossible to lay at the 25 door of imprudence — was now reduced to nothing. They were in fact in the very teeth of starvation, when the manager, who knew and respected them in better days, took the little Barbara into his company.

At the period I commenced with, her slender earnings 30 were the sole support of the family, including two younger sisters. I must throw a veil over some mortifying circumstances. Enough to say, that her Saturday's pittance was the only chance of a Sunday's (generally their only) meal of meat.

One thing I will only mention, that in some child's part, where in her theatrical character she was to sup off a roast fowl (O joy to Barbara !) some comic actor, who was for the night caterer for this dainty—in the misguided humour of his part, threw over the dish such a quantity of salt (O grief and 5 pain of heart to Barbara !) that when he crammed a portion of it into her mouth, she was obliged sputteringly to reject it; and what with shame of her ill-acted part, and pain of real appetite at missing such a dainty, her little heart sobbed almost to breaking, till a flood of tears, which the well-fed spectators 10 were totally unable to comprehend, mercifully relieved her.

This was the little starved, meritorious maid, who stood before old Ravenscroft, the treasurer, for her Saturday's payment.

Ravenscroft was a man, I have heard many old theatrical people besides herself say, of all men least calculated for a 15 treasurer. He had no head for accounts, paid away at random, kept scarce any books, and summing up at the week's end, if he found himself a pound or so deficient, blest himself that it was no worse.

Now Barbara's weekly stipend was a bare half guinea.—By 20 mistake he popped into her hand a—whole one.

Barbara tripped away.

She was entirely unconscious at first of the mistake: God knows, Ravenscroft would never have discovered it.

But when she had got down to the first of those uncouth 25 landing-places, she became sensible of an unusual weight of metal pressing her little hand.

Now mark the dilemma.

She was by nature a good child. From her parents and those about her she had imbibed no contrary influence. But 30 then they had taught her nothing. Poor men's smoky cabins are not always porticoes of moral philosophy. This little maid had no instinct to evil, but then she might be said to have no fixed principle. She had heard honesty commended, but

never dreamed of its application to herself. She thought of it as something which concerned grown-up people—men and women. She had never known temptation, or thought of preparing resistance against it.

5 Her first impulse was to go back to the old treasurer, and explain to him his blunder. He was already so confused with age, besides a natural want of punctuality, that she would have had some difficulty in making him understand it. She saw *that* in an instant. And then it was such a bit of money !
10 and then the image of a larger allowance of butcher's meat on their table next day came across her, till her little eyes glistened, and her mouth moistened. But then Mr. Ravenscroft had always been so good-natured, had stood her friend behind the scenes, and even recommended her promotion to some of
15 her little parts. But again the old man was reputed to be worth a world of money. He was supposed to have fifty pounds a year clear of the theatre. And then came staring upon her the figures of her little stockingless and shoeless sisters. And when she looked at her own neat white cotton
20 stockings, which her situation at the theatre had made it indispensable for her mother to provide for her, with hard straining and pinching from the family stock, and thought how glad she should be to cover their poor feet with the same—and how then they could accompany her to rehearsals, which they had
25 hitherto been precluded from doing, by reason of their unfashionable attire,—in these thoughts she reached the second landing-place — the second, I mean from the top — for there was still another left to traverse.

Now virtue support Barbara !

30 And that never-failing friend did step in—for at that moment a strength not her own I have heard her say, was revealed to her — a reason above reasoning—and without her own agency, as it seemed (for she never felt her feet to move) she found herself transported back to the individual desk she had

just quitted, and her hand in the old hand of Ravenscroft, who in silence took back the refunded treasure, and who had been sitting (good man) insensible to the lapse of minutes, which to her were anxious ages ; and from that moment a deep peace fell upon her heart, and she knew the quality of honesty. 5

A year or two's unrepining application to her profession brightened up the feet and the prospects of her little sisters, set the whole family upon their legs again, and released her from the difficulty of discussing moral dogmas upon a landing-place.

I have heard her say, that it was a surprise, not much short 10 of mortification to her, to see the coolness with which the old man pocketed the difference, which had caused her such mortal throes.

This anecdote of herself I had in the year 1800, from the mouth of the late Mrs. Crawford,¹ then sixty-seven years of 15 age (she died soon after) ; and to her struggles upon this childish occasion I have sometimes ventured to think her indebted for that power of rending the heart in the representation of conflicting emotions, for which in after-years she was considered as little inferior (if at all so in the part of Lady 20 Randolph) even to Mrs. Siddons.

XXIX. THE SUPERANNUATED MAN

Sera tamen respexit

Libertas.

VIRGIL.

A Clerk I was in London gay.

O'KEEFE.

IF peradventure, Reader, it has been thy lot to waste the golden years of thy life — thy shining youth — in the irksome confinement of an office ; to have thy prison days prolonged

¹ The maiden name of this lady was Street, which she changed, by successive marriages, for those of Dancer, Barry, and Crawford. She was Mrs. Crawford, a third time a widow, when I knew her.

through middle age down to decrepitude and silver hairs without hope of release or respite ; to have lived to forget that there are such things as holidays, or to remember them but as the prerogatives of childhood ; then, and then only, will you 5 be able to appreciate my deliverance.

It is now six-and-thirty years since I took my seat at the desk in Mincing Lane. Melancholy was the transition at fourteen from the abundant play-time, and the frequently-intervening vacations of school-days, to the eight, nine, and 10 sometimes ten hours' a day attendance at a counting-house.

But time partially reconciles us to anything. I gradually became content—doggedly contented, as wild animals in cages.

It is true I had my Sundays to myself ; but Sundays, 15 admirable as the institution of them is for purposes of worship, are for that very reason the very worst adapted for days of unbending and recreation.¹ In particular, there is a gloom for me attendant upon a city Sunday, a weight in the air. I miss the cheerful cries of London, the music, and the ballad-singers 20 — the buzz and stirring murmur of the streets. Those eternal bells depress me. The closed shops repel me. Prints, pictures, all the glittering and endless succession of knacks and gewgaws, and ostentatiously displayed wares of tradesmen, which make a week-day saunter through the less busy parts of 25 the metropolis so delightful—are shut out. No book-stalls

¹ Our ancestors, the noble old Puritans of Cromwell's day, could distinguish between a day of religious rest and a day of recreation ; and while they exacted a rigorous abstinence from all amusements (even to the walking out of nurserymaids with their little charges in the fields) upon the Sabbath ; in the lieu of the superstitious observance of the saints' days, which they abrogated, they humanely gave to the apprentices and poorer sort of people every alternate Thursday for a day of entire sport and recreation. A strain of piety and policy to be commended above the profane mockery of the Stuarts and their book of sports.

deliciously to idle over — no busy faces to recreate the idle man who contemplates them ever passing by — the very face of business a charm by contrast to his temporary relaxation from it. Nothing to be seen but unhappy countenances — or half-happy at best — of emancipated 'prentices and little tradesfolks, with here and there a servant-maid that has got leave to go out, who slaving all the week, with the habit has lost almost all the capacity of enjoying a free hour ; and livelily expressing the hollowness of a day's pleasure. The very strollers in the fields on that day look anything but comfortable. 5

But besides Sundays I had a day at Easter, and a day at Christmas, with a full week in the summer to go and air myself in my native fields of Hertfordshire. This last was a great indulgence ; and the prospect of its recurrence, I believe, 15 alone kept me up through the year, and made my durance tolerable. But when the week came round, did the glittering phantom of the distance keep touch with me ? or rather was it not a series of seven uneasy days, spent in restless pursuit of pleasure, and a wearisome anxiety to find out how to make the 20 most of them ? Where was the quiet, where the promised rest ? Before I had a taste of it, it was vanished. I was at the desk again, counting upon the fifty-one tedious weeks that must intervene before such another snatch would come. Still the prospect of its coming threw something of an illumination upon 25 the darker side of my captivity. Without it, as I have said, I could scarcely have sustained my thraldom.

Independently of the rigours of attendance, I have ever been haunted with a sense (perhaps a mere caprice) of incapacity for business. This, during my latter years, had increased to 30 such a degree, that it was visible in all the lines of my countenance. My health and my good spirits flagged. I had perpetually a dread of some crisis, to which I should be found unequal. Besides my daylight servitude, I served over again

all night in my sleep, and would wake with terrors of imaginary false entries, errors in my accounts, and the like. I was fifty years of age, and no prospect of emancipation presented itself. I had grown to my desk, as it were ; and the wood 5 had entered into my soul.

My fellows in the office would sometimes rally me upon the trouble legible in my countenance ; but I did not know that it had raised the suspicions of any of my employers, when, on the 5th of last month, a day ever to be remembered by me, 10 L——, the junior partner in the firm, calling me on one side, directly taxed me with my bad looks, and frankly inquired the cause of them. So taxed, I honestly made confession of my infirmity, and added that I was afraid I should eventually be obliged to resign his service. He spoke some words of course 15 to hearten me, and there the matter rested. A whole week I remained labouring under the impression that I had acted imprudently in my disclosure ; that I had foolishly given a handle against myself, and had been anticipating my own dismissal. A week passed in this manner, the most anxious one, 20 I verily believe, in my whole life, when on the evening of the 12th of April, just as I was about quitting my desk to go home (it might be about eight o'clock) I received an awful summons to attend the presence of the whole assembled firm in the formidable back parlour. I thought, Now my time is 25 surely come, I have done for myself, I am going to be told that they have no longer occasion for me. L——, I could see, smiled at the terror I was in, which was a little relief to me, — when to my utter astonishment B——, the eldest partner, began a formal harangue to me on the length of my services, 30 my very meritorious conduct during the whole of the time (the deuce, thought I, how did he find out that? I protest I never had the confidence to think as much). He went on to descant on the expediency of retiring at a certain time of life (how my heart panted !) and asking me a few questions as to

the amount of my own property, of which I have a little, ended with a proposal, to which his three partners nodded a grave assent, that I should accept from the house which I had served so well, a pension for life to the amount of two-thirds of my accustomed salary — a magnificent offer ! I do not know what 5 I answered between surprise and gratitude, but it was understood that I accepted their proposal, and I was told that I was free from that hour to leave their service. I stammered out a bow, and at just ten minutes after eight I went home — for ever. This noble benefit — gratitude forbids me to conceal their 10 names — I owe to the kindness of the most munificent firm in the world — the house of Boldero, Merryweather, Bosanquet, and Lacy.

Esto perpetua !

For the first day or two I felt stunned, overwhelmed. I 15 could only apprehend my felicity ; I was too confused to taste it sincerely. I wandered about, thinking I was happy, and knowing that I was not. I was in the condition of a prisoner in the old Bastile, suddenly let loose after a forty years' confinement. I could scarce trust myself with myself. It was 20 like passing out of Time into Eternity — for it is a sort of Eternity for a man to have his Time all to himself. It seemed to me that I had more time on my hands than I could ever manage. From a poor man, poor in Time, I was suddenly lifted up into a vast revenue ; I could see no end of my pos- 25 sessions ; I wanted some steward, or judicious bailiff, to manage my estates in Time for me. And here let me caution persons grown old in active business, not lightly, nor without weighing their old resources, to forego their customary employment all at once, for there may be danger in it. I feel it by myself, 30 but I know that my resources are sufficient ; and now that those first giddy raptures have subsided, I have a quiet home-feeling of the blessedness of my condition. I am in no hurry.

Having all holidays, I am as though I had none. If Time hung heavy upon me, I could walk it away; but I do *not* walk all day long, as I used to do in those old transient holidays, thirty miles a day, to make the most of them. If Time were 5 troublesome, I could read it away, but I do *not* read in that violent measure, with which, having no Time my own but candle-light Time, I used to weary out my head and eyesight in bygone winters. I walk, read, or scribble (as now) just when the fit seizes me. I no longer hunt after pleasure; I let it 10 come to me. I am like the man

— That's born, and has his years come to him
In some green desert.

“Years,” you will say! “what is this superannuated simpleton calculating upon? He has already told us, he is past 15 fifty.”

I have indeed lived nominally fifty years, but deduct out of them the hours which I have lived to other people, and not to myself, and you will find me still a young fellow. For *that* is the only true Time, which a man can properly call his own, 20 that which he has all to himself; the rest, though in some sense he may be said to live it, is other people's time, not his. The remnant of my poor days, long or short, is at least multiplied for me, threefold. My ten next years, if I stretch so far, will be as long as any preceding thirty. 'T is a fair rule-of-three 25 sum.

Among the strange fantasies which beset me at the commencement of my freedom, and of which all traces are not yet gone, one was, that a vast tract of time had intervened since I quitted the Counting-House. I could not conceive of it as 30 an affair of yesterday. The partners, and the clerks, with whom I had for so many years, and for so many hours in each day of the year, been closely associated — being suddenly removed from them — they seemed as dead to me. There is a fine

passage, which may serve to illustrate this fancy, in a Tragedy by Sir Robert Howard, speaking of a friend's death :

— 'T was but just now he went away ;
I have not since had time to shed a tear ;
And yet the distance does the same appear
As if he had been a thousand years from me,
Time takes no measure in Eternity.

5

To dissipate this awkward feeling, I have been fain to go among them once or twice since ; to visit my old desk-fellows — my co-brethren of the quill — that I had left below in the 10 state militant. Not all the kindness with which they received me could quite restore me to that pleasant familiarity, which I had heretofore enjoyed among them. We cracked some of our old jokes, but methought they went off but faintly. My old desk ; the peg where I hung my hat, were appropriated to 15 another. I knew it must be, but I could not take it kindly. D——l take me, if I did not feel some remorse — beast, if I had not, — at quitting my old compeers, the faithful partners of my toil for six-and-thirty years, that smoothed for me with their jokes and conundrums the ruggedness of my professional 20 road. Had it been so rugged then after all? or was I a coward simply? Well, it is too late to repent ; and I also know, that these suggestions are a common fallacy of the mind on such occasions. But my heart smote me. I had violently broken the bands betwixt us. It was at least not courteous. I shall 25 be some time before I get quite reconciled to the separation. Farewell, old cronies, yet not for long, for again and again I will come among ye, if I shall have your leave. Farewell Ch——, dry, sarcastic, and friendly! Do——, mild, slow to move, and gentlemanly! Pl——, officious to do, and to vol- 30 unteer, good services! — and thou, thou dreary pile, fit mansion for a Gresham or a Whittington of old, stately House of Merchants ; with thy labyrinthine passages, and light-excluding,

pent-up offices, where candles for one-half the year supplied the place of the sun's light ; unhealthy contributor to my weal, stern fosterer of my living, farewell ! In thee remain, and not in the obscure collection of some wandering bookseller, my 5 "works!" There let them rest, as I do from my labours, piled on thy massy shelves, more MSS. in folio than ever Aquinas left, and full as useful ! My mantle I bequeath among ye.

A fortnight has passed since the date of my first communion. At that period I was approaching to tranquillity, but had not reached it. I boasted of a calm indeed, but it was comparative only. Something of the first flutter was left ; an unsettling sense of novelty ; the dazzle to weak eyes of unaccustomed light. I missed my old chains, forsooth, as if they 15 had been some necessary part of my apparel. I was a poor Carthusian, from strict cellular discipline suddenly by some revolution returned upon the world. I am now as if I had never been other than my own master. It is natural to me to go where I please, to do what I please. I find myself at eleven 20 o'clock in the day in Bond Street, and it seems to me that I have been sauntering there at that very hour for years past. I digress into Soho, to explore a book-stall. Methinks I have been thirty years a collector. There is nothing strange nor new in it. I find myself before a fine picture in a morning. 25 Was it ever otherwise ? What is become of Fish Street Hill ? Where is Fenchurch Street ? Stones of old Mincing Lane which I have worn with my daily pilgrimage for six-and-thirty years, to the footsteps of what toil-worn clerk are your everlasting flints now vocal ? I indent the gayer flags of Pall Mall. It is 30 'Change time, and I am strangely among the Elgin marbles. It was no hyperbole when I ventured to compare the change in my condition to a passing into another world. Time stands still in a manner to me. I have lost all distinction of season. I do not know the day of the week, or of the month. Each

day used to be individually felt by me in its reference to the foreign post days; in its distance from, or propinquity to, the next Sunday. I had my Wednesday feelings, my Saturday nights' sensations. The genius of each day was upon me distinctly during the whole of it, affecting my appetite, spirits, &c. The phantom of the next day, with the dreary five to follow, sate as a load upon my poor Sabbath recreations. What charm has washed that Ethiop white? What is gone of Black Monday? All days are the same. Sunday itself—that unfortunate failure of a holiday as it too often proved, what with my sense of its fugitiveness, and over-care to get the greatest quantity of pleasure out of it—is melted down into a weekday. I can spare to go to church now, without grudging the huge cantle which it used to seem to cut out of the holiday. I have Time for everything. I can visit a sick friend. I can interrupt a man of much occupation when he is busiest. I can insult over him with an invitation to take a day's pleasure with me to Windsor this fine May-morning. It is Lucretian pleasure to behold the poor drudges, whom I have left behind in the world, carking and caring; like horses in a mill, drudging on in the same eternal round—and what is it all for? [I recite those verses of Cowley which so mightily agree with my constitution:—

Business! the frivolous pretence
Of human lusts to shake off innocence :
Business! the grave impertinence :
Business! the thing which I, of all things, hate :
Business! the contradiction of my fate.

Or I repeat my own lines, written in my clerk state:—

Who first-invented work, &c.—

O this divine leisure! Reader, if thou art furnished with the old series of the "London," turn incontinently to the third

volume (page 367), and you will see my present condition there touched in a "Wish" by a daintier pen than I can pretend to. I subscribe to that Sonnet *toto corde*.] A man can never have too much Time to himself, nor too little to do.
5 Had I a little son, I would christen him NOTHING-TO-DO ; he should do nothing. Man, I verily believe, is out of his element as long as he is operative. I am altogether for the life contemplative. Will no kindly earthquake come and swallow up those accursed cotton mills? Take me that lumber of a desk
10 there, and bowl it down

As low as to the fiends.

I am no longer * * * * *, clerk to the Firm of &c. I am Retired Leisure. I am to be met with in trim gardens. I am already come to be known by my vacant face and careless
15 gesture, perambulating at no fixed pace, nor with any settled purpose. I walk about ; not to and from. They tell me, a certain *cum dignitate* air, that has been buried so long with my other good parts, has begun to shoot forth in my person. I grow into gentility perceptibly. When I take up a newspaper,
20 it is to read the state of the opera. *Opus operatum est.* I have done all that I came into this world to do. I have worked task-work, and have the rest of the day to myself.

XXX. SANITY OF TRUE GENIUS

So far from the position holding true, that great wit (or genius, in our modern way of speaking) has a necessary
25 alliance with insanity, the greatest wits, on the contrary, will ever be found to be the sanest writers. It is impossible for the mind to conceive of a mad Shakespeare. The greatness of wit, by which the poetic talent is here chiefly to be understood, manifests itself in the admirable balance of all
30 the faculties. Madness is the disproportionate straining or

excess of any one of them. "So strong a wit," says Cowley, speaking of a poetical friend,

— did Nature to him frame,
As all things but his judgment overcame,
His judgment like the heavenly moon did show
Tempering that mighty sea below.

5

The ground of the mistake is, that men, finding in the raptures of the higher poetry a condition of exaltation, to which they have no parallel in their own experience, besides the spurious resemblance of it in dreams and fevers, impute a 10 state of dreaminess and fever to the poet. But the true poet dreams being awake. He is not possessed by his subject, but has dominion over it. In the groves of Eden he walks familiar as in his native paths. He ascends the empyrean heaven, and is not intoxicated. He treads the burning marl 15 without dismay ; he wins his flight without self-loss through realms of chaos "and old night." Or if, abandoning himself to that severer chaos of a "human mind untuned," he is content awhile to be mad with Lear, or to hate mankind (a sort of madness) with Timon, neither is that madness, nor this 20 misanthropy, so unchecked, but that,— never letting the reins of reason wholly go, while most he seems to do so,— he has his better genius still whispering at his ear, with the good servant Kent suggesting saner counsels, or with the honest steward Flavius recommending kindlier resolutions. Where 25 he seems most to recede from humanity, he will be found the truest to it. From beyond the scope of Nature if he summon possible existences, he subjugates them to the law of her consistency. He is beautifully loyal to that sovereign directress, even when he appears most to betray and desert her. His 30 ideal tribes submit to policy ; his very monsters are tamed to his hand, even as that wild sea-brood shepherded by Proteus. He tames, and he clothes them with attributes of flesh and

blood till they wonder at themselves, like Indian Islanders forced to submit to European vesture. Caliban, the Witches, are as true to the laws of their own nature (ours with a difference), as Othello, Hamlet, and Macbeth. Herein the great 5 and the little wits are differenced ; that if the latter wander ever so little from nature or actual existence, they lose themselves and their readers. Their phantoms are lawless ; their visions nightmares. They do not create, which implies shaping and consistency. Their imaginations are not active — for to 10 be active is to call something into act and form — but passive, as men in sick dreams. For the supernatural, or something superadded to what we know of nature, they give you the plainly non-natural. And if this were all, and that these 15 mental hallucinations were discoverable only in the treatment of subjects out of nature, or transcending it, the judgment might with some plea be pardoned if it ran riot, and a little wantonized : but even in the describing of real and every-day life, that which is before their eyes, one of these lesser wits shall more deviate from nature — show more of that inconsequence, 20 which has a natural alliance with frenzy, — than a great genius in his “maddest fits,” as Withers somewhere calls them. We appeal to any one that is acquainted with the common run of Lane’s novels, — as they existed some twenty or thirty years back, — those scanty intellectual viands of the whole female 25 reading public, till a happier genius arose, and expelled for ever the innutritious phantoms, — whether he has not found his brain more “betossed,” his memory more puzzled, his sense of when and where more confounded, among the improbable events, the incoherent incidents, the inconsistent characters, 30 or no characters, of some third-rate love intrigue — where the persons shall be a Lord Glendamour and a Miss Rivers, and the scene only alternate between Bath and Bond Street — a more bewildering dreaminess induced upon him, than he has felt wandering over all the fairy grounds of Spenser. In the

productions we refer to, nothing but names and places is familiar; the persons are neither of this world nor of any other conceivable one; an endless string of activities without purpose, of purposes destitute of motive:—we meet phantoms in our known walks; *fantasques* only christened. In the poet we 5 have names which announce fiction; and we have absolutely no place at all, for the things and persons of the Faërie Queene prate not of their “whereabout.” But in their inner nature, and the law of their speech and actions, we are at home and upon acquainted ground. The one turns life into a dream; 10 the other to the wildest dreams gives the sobrieties of every-day occurrences. By what subtle art of tracing the mental processes it is effected, we are not philosophers enough to explain, but in that wonderful episode of the cave of Mammon, in which the Money God appears first in the lowest form of a 15 miser, is then a worker of metals, and becomes the god of all the treasures of the world; and has a daughter, Ambition, before whom all the world kneels for favours—with the Hesperian fruit, the waters of Tantalus, with Pilate washing his hands vainly, but not impertinently, in the same stream— 20 that we should be at one moment in the cave of an old hoarder of treasures, at the next at the forge of the Cyclops, in a palace and yet in hell, all at once, with the shifting mutations of the most rambling dream, and our judgment yet all the time awake, and neither able nor willing to detect the 25 fallacy,—is a proof of that hidden sanity which still guides the poet in his wildest seeming-aberrations.

It is not enough to say that the whole episode is a copy of the mind's conceptions in sleep; it is, in some sort—but what a copy! Let the most romantic of us, that has been entertained 30 all night with the spectacle of some wild and magnificent vision, recombine it in the morning, and try it by his waking judgment. That which appeared so shifting, and yet so coherent, while that faculty was passive, when it comes under cool

examination, shall appear so reasonless and so unlinked, that we are ashamed to have been so deluded ; and to have taken, though but in sleep, a monster for a god. But the transitions in this episode are every whit as violent as in the most extravagant dream, and yet the waking judgment ratifies them.

XXXI. TO THE SHADE OF ELLISTON

JOYOUSEST of once embodied spirits, whither at length hast thou flown? to what genial region are we permitted to conjecture that thou hast flitted?

Art thou sowing thy WILD OATS yet (the harvest time was still to come with thee) upon casual sands of Avernus? or art thou enacting ROVER (as we would gladlier think) by wandering Elysian streams?

This mortal frame, while thou didst play thy brief antics amongst us, was in truth anything but a prison to thee, as the vain Platonist dreams of this *body* to be no better than a county gaol, forsooth, or some house of durance vile, whereof the five senses are the fettters. Thou knewest better than to be in a hurry to cast off those gyves ; and hadst notice to quit, I fear, before thou wert quite ready to abandon this fleshy tenement. It was thy Pleasure House, thy Palace of Dainty Devices ; thy Louvre, or thy White Hall.

What new mysterious lodgings dost thou tenant now? or when may we expect thy aërial house-warming?

Tartarus we know, and we have read of the Blessed Shades ; now cannot I intelligibly fancy thee in either.

Is it too much to hazard a conjecture, that (as the schoolmen admitted a receptacle apart for Patriarchs and un-chrisom Babes) there may exist—not far perchance from that storehouse of all vanities, which Milton saw in visions—a LIMBO somewhere for PLAYERS? and that

Up thither like aërial vapours fly
 Both all Stage things, and all that in Stage things
 Built their fond hopes of glory, or lasting fame?
 All the unaccomplish'd works of Authors' hands,
 Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
 Damn'd upon earth, fleet thither—
 Play, Opera, Farce, with all their trumpery.—

5

There, by the neighbouring moon (by some not improperly supposed thy Regent Planet upon earth) mayst thou not still be acting thy managerial pranks, great disembodied Lessee? ¹⁰ but Lessee still, and still a Manager.

In Green Rooms, impervious to mortal eye, the muse beholds thee wielding posthumous empire.

Thin ghosts of Figurantes (never plump on earth) circle thee in endlessly, and still their song is *Fie on sinful Phantasy.* ¹⁵

Magnificent were thy capriccios on this globe of earth, ROBERT WILLIAM ELLISTON! for as yet we know not thy new name in heaven.

It irks me to think, that, stripped of thy regalities, thou shouldst ferry over, a poor forked shade, in crazy Stygian ²⁰ wherry. Methinks I hear the old boatman, paddling by the weedy wharf, with raucid voice, bawling, "SCULLS, SCULLS :" to which, with waving hand, and majestic action, thou deignest no reply, other than in two curt monosyllables, "No : OARS."

25

But the laws of Pluto's kingdom know small difference between king, and cobbler; manager, and call-boy; and, if haply your dates of life were conterminant, you are quietly taking your passage, cheek by cheek (O ignoble levelling of Death) with the shade of some recently departed candle-snuffer.

30

But mercy! what strippings, what tearing off of histrionic robes, and private vanities! what denudations to the bone, before the surly Ferryman will admit you to set a foot within his battered lighter

Crowns, sceptres ; shield, sword, and truncheon ; thy own coronation robes (for thou hast brought the whole property man's wardrobe with thee, enough to sink a navy) ; the judge's ermine ; the coxcomb's wig ; the snuff-box *à la Foppington* 5 — all must overboard, he positively swears — and that ancient mariner brooks no denial ; for, since the tiresome monodrame of the old Thracian Harper, Charon, it is to be believed, hath shown small taste for theatricals.

Ay, now 't is done. You are just boat weight ; *pura et puta* 10 *anima*.

But bless me, how *little* you look.

So shall we all look — kings, and kaisers — stripped for the last voyage.

But the murky rogue pushes off. Adieu, pleasant, and 15 thrice pleasant shade ! with my parting thanks for many a heavy hour of life lightened by thy harmless extravaganzas, public or domestic.

Rhadamanthus, who tries the lighter causes below, leaving to his two brethren the heavy calendars — honest Rhadamanth, 20 always partial to players, weighing their parti-coloured existence here upon earth, — making account of the few foibles, that may have shaded thy *real life*, as we call it (though, substantially, scarcely less a vapour than thy idlest vagaries upon the boards of Drury), as but of so many echoes, natural repercussions, 25 and results to be expected from the assumed extravagancies of thy *secondary* or *mock life*, nightly upon a stage — after a lenient castigation, with rods lighter than of those Medusean ringlets, but just enough to “ whip the offending Adam out of thee ” — shall courteously dismiss thee at the right-hand gate 30 — the o. p. side of Hades — that conducts to masques, and merry-makings, in the Theatre Royal of Proserpine.

PLAUDITO, ET VALETO.

Thy friend upon earth,
Though thou didst connive at his d——n.

MR. H.

XXXII. ELLISTONIANA

My acquaintance with the pleasant creature, whose loss we all deplore, was but slight.

My first introduction to E., which afterwards ripened into an acquaintance a little on this side of intimacy, was over a counter of the Leamington Spa Library, then newly entered 5 upon by a branch of his family. E., whom nothing misbecame — to auspicate, I suppose, the filial concern, and set it a-going with a lustre — was serving in person two damsels fair, who had come into the shop ostensibly to inquire for some new publication, but in reality to have a sight of the illustrious shopman, 10 hoping some conference. With what an air did he reach down the volume, dispassionately giving his opinion upon the worth of the work in question, and launching out into a dissertation on its comparative merits with those of certain publications of a similar stamp, its rivals ! his enchanted customers fairly hanging on his lips, subdued to their authoritative sentence. So have I seen a gentleman in comedy *acting* the shopman. So Lovelace sold his gloves in King Street. I admired the histrionic art, by which he contrived to carry clean away every notion of disgrace, from the occupation he had so generously 20 submitted to ; and from that hour I judged him, with no after repentance, to be a person, with whom it would be a felicity to be more acquainted.

To descant upon his merits as a Comedian would be superfluous. With his blended private and professional habits alone 25 I have to do ; that harmonious fusion of the manners of the player into those of every-day life, which brought the stage boards into streets, and dining-parlours, and kept up the play when the play was ended.— “I like Wrench,” a friend was saying to him one day, “because he is the same natural, easy 30 creature, *on* the stage that he is *off*.” “My case exactly,”

retorted Elliston—with a charming forgetfulness, that the converse of a proposition does not always lead to the same conclusion—"I am the same person *off* the stage that I am *on*." The inference, at first sight, seems identical; but examine it 5 a little, and it confesses only, that the one performer was never, and the other always, *acting*.

And in truth this was the charm of Elliston's private deportment. You had a spirited performance always going on before your eyes, with nothing to pay. As where a monarch takes 10 up his casual abode for a night, the poorest hovel which he honours by his sleeping in it, becomes *ipso facto* for that time a palace; so wherever Elliston walked, sate, or stood still, there was the theatre. He carried about with him his pit, boxes, and galleries, and set up his portable playhouse at corners of 15 streets, and in the market-places. Upon flintiest pavements he trod the boards still; and if his theme chanced to be passionate, the green baize carpet of tragedy spontaneously rose beneath his feet. Now this was hearty, and showed a love for his art. So Apelles *always* painted—in thought. So G. D. 20 *always* poetises. I hate a lukewarm artist. I have known actors—and some of them of Elliston's own stamp—who shall have agreeably been amusing you in the part of a rake or a coxcomb, through the two or three hours of their dramatic existence; but no sooner does the curtain fall with its leaden 25 clatter, but a spirit of lead seems to seize on all their faculties. They emerge sour, morose persons, intolerable to their families, servants, &c. Another shall have been expanding your heart with generous deeds and sentiments, till it even beats with yearnings of universal sympathy; you absolutely long to go 30 home, and do some good action. The play seems tedious, till you can get fairly out of the house, and realize your laudable intentions. At length the final bell rings, and this cordial representative of all that is amiable in human breasts steps forth—a miser. Elliston was more of a piece. Did he *play*

Ranger? and did Ranger fill the general bosom of the town with satisfaction? why should *he* not be Ranger, and diffuse the same cordial satisfaction among his private circles? with *his* temperament, *his* animal spirits, *his* good nature, *his* follies perchance, could he do better than identify himself with his impersonation? Are we to like a pleasant rake, or coxcomb, on the stage, and give ourselves airs of aversion for the identical character presented to us in actual life? or what would the performer have gained by divesting himself of the impersonation? Could the man Elliston have been essentially different 10 from his part, even if he had avoided to reflect to us studiously, in private circles, the airy briskness, the forwardness, and scapegoat trickeries of his prototype? 5

“But there is something not natural in this everlasting *acting*; we want the real man.” 15

Are you quite sure that it is not the man himself, whom you cannot, or will not see, under some adventitious trappings, which, nevertheless, sit not at all inconsistently upon him. What if it is the nature of some men to be highly artificial? The fault is least reprehensible in *players*. Cibber was his 20 own Foppington, with almost as much wit as Vanbrugh could add to it.

“My conceit of his person,” — it is Ben Jonson speaking of Lord Bacon, — “was never increased towards him by his *place* or *honours*. But I have, and do reverence him for the *greatness*, that was only proper to himself; in that he seemed to me ever one of the *greatest* men, that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that heaven would give him strength; for *greatness* he could not want.” 25

The quality here commended was scarcely less conspicuous 30 in the subject of these idle reminiscences, than in my Lord Verulam. Those who have imagined that an unexpected elevation to the direction of a great London Theatre, affected the consequence of Elliston, or at all changed his nature,

knew not the essential *greatness* of the man whom they disparage. It was my fortune to encounter him near St. Dunstan's Church (which, with its punctual giants, is now no more than dust and a shadow), on the morning of his election to that 5 high office. Grasping my hand with a look of significance, he only uttered, — “Have you heard the news?” — then with another look following up the blow, he subjoined, “I am the future Manager of Drury Lane Theatre.” — Breathless as he saw me, he stayed not for congratulation or reply, but mutely 10 stalked away, leaving me to chew upon his new-blown dignities at leisure. In fact, nothing could be said to it. Expressive silence alone could muse his praise. This was in his *great* style.

But was he less *great* (be witness, O ye Powers of Equanimity, that supported in the ruins of Carthage the consular exile, and more recently transmuted for a more illustrious exile, the barren constableship of Elba into an image of Imperial France), when, in melancholy after years, again, much nearer the same spot, I met him, when that sceptre had 20 been wrested from his hand, and his dominion was curtailed to the petty managership, and part proprietorship, of the small Olympic, *his Elba?* He still played nightly upon the boards of Drury, but in parts, alas! allotted to him, not magnificently distributed by him. Waiving his great loss as 25 nothing, and magnificently sinking the sense of fallen *material* grandeur in the more liberal resentment of deprecations done to his more lofty *intellectual* pretensions, “Have you heard” (his customary exordium) — “have you heard,” said he, “how they treat me? they put me in *comedy*.” Thought I — but his 30 finger on his lips forbade any verbal interruption — “Where could they have put you better?” Then, after a pause — “Where I formerly played Romeo, I now play Mercutio,” — and so again he stalked away, neither staying, nor caring for, responses.

O, it was a rich scene,— but Sir A—— C——, the best of story-tellers and surgeons, who mends a lame narrative almost as well as he sets a fracture, alone could do justice to it—that I was witness to, in the tarnished room (that had once been green) of that same little Olympic. There, after his deposition from Imperial Drury, he substituted a throne. That Olympic Hill was his “highest heaven”; himself “Jove in his chair.” There he sat in state, while before him, on complaint of prompter, was brought for judgment— how shall I describe her?— one of those little tawdry things that flirt at 10 the tails of choruses— a probationer for the town, in either of of its senses— the pertest little drab— a dirty fringe and appendage of the lamps’ smoke— who, it seems, on some disapprobation expressed by a “highly respectable” audience, had precipitately quitted her station on the boards, and 15 withdrawn her small talents in disgust.

“And how dare you,” said her Manager— assuming a sensorial severity which would have crushed the confidence of a Vestris, and disarmed that beautiful Rebel herself of her professional caprices—I verily believe, he thought *her* 20 standing before him—“how dare you, madam, withdraw yourself, without a notice, from your theatrical duties?” “I was hissed, sir.” “And you have the presumption to decide upon the taste of the town?” “I don’t know that, sir, but I will never stand to be hissed,” was the subjoinder of young 25 Confidence— when gathering up his features into one significant mass of wonder, pity, and expostulatory indignation—in a lesson never to have been lost upon a creature less forward than she who stood before him— his words were these: “They have hissed *me.*” 30

’Twas the identical argument, *à fortiori*, which the son of Peleus uses to Lycaon trembling under his lance, to persuade him to take his destiny with a good grace. “I too am mortal.” And it is to be believed that in both cases the

rhetoric missed of its application, for want of a proper understanding with the faculties of the respective recipients.

“Quite an Opera pit,” he said to me, as he was courteously conducting me over the benches of his Surrey Theatre, the 5 last retreat, and recess, of his every-day waning grandeur.

Those who knew Elliston, will know the *manner* in which he pronounced the latter sentence of the few words I am about to record. One proud day to me he took his roast mutton with us in the Temple, to which I had superadded 10 a preliminary haddock. After a rather plentiful partaking of the meagre banquet, not unrefreshed with the humbler sort of liquors, I made a sort of apology for the humility of the fare, observing that for my own part I never ate but of one dish at dinner. “I too never eat but one thing at 15 dinner” — was his reply — then after a pause — “reckoning fish as nothing.” The manner was all. It was as if by one peremptory sentence he had decreed the annihilation of all the savory esculents, which the pleasant and nutritious food-giving Ocean pours forth upon poor humans from her watery bosom. 20 This was *greatness*, tempered with considerate *tenderness* to the feelings of his scanty but welcoming entertainer.

Great wert thou in thy life, Robert William Elliston ! and *not lessened* in thy death, if report speak truly, which says that thou didst direct that thy mortal remains should repose under 25 no inscription but one of pure *Latinity*. Classical was thy bringing up ! and beautiful was the feeling on thy last bed, which, connecting the man with the boy, took thee back in thy latest exercise of imagination, to the days when, undreaming of Theatres and Managerships, thou wert a scholar, and 30 an early ripe one, under the roofs builded by the munificent and pious Colet. For thee the Pauline Muses weep. In elegies, that shall silence this crude prose, they shall celebrate thy praise.

XXXIII. NEWSPAPERS THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

DAN STUART once told us, that he did not remember that he ever deliberately walked into the Exhibition at Somerset House in his life. He might occasionally have escorted a party of ladies across the way that were going in; but he never went in of his own head. Yet the office of the *Morning Post* 5 newspaper stood then just where it does now—we are carrying you back, Reader, some thirty years or more—with its gilt-globe-topped front facing that emporium of our artists' grand Annual Exposure. We sometimes wish that we had observed the same abstinence with Daniel. 10

A word or two of D. S. He ever appeared to us one of the finest-tempered of Editors. Perry, of the *Morning Chronicle*, was equally pleasant, with a dash, no slight one either, of the courtier. S. was frank, plain, and English all over. We have worked for both these gentlemen. 15

It is soothing to contemplate the head of the Ganges; to trace the first little bubblings of a mighty river;

With holy reverence to approach the rocks,
Whence glide the streams renown'd in ancient song.

Fired with a perusal of the Abyssinian Pilgrim's exploratory 20 ramblings after the cradle of the infant Nilus, we well remember on one fine summer holiday (a "whole day's leave" we called it at Christ's Hospital) sallying forth at rise of sun, not very well provisioned either for such an undertaking, to trace the current of the New River—Middletonian stream!—to its 25 scaturient source, as we had read, in meadows by fair Amwell. Gallantly did we commence our solitary quest—for it was essential to the dignity of a DISCOVERY, that no eye of schoolboy save our own, should beam on the detection. By flowery spots, and verdant lanes, skirting Hornsey, Hope trained us 30

on in many a baffling turn ; endless, hopeless meanders, as it seemed ; or as if the jealous waters had *dodged* us, reluctant to have the humble spot of their nativity revealed ; till spent, and nigh famished, before set of the same sun, we sat down 5 somewhere by Bowes Farm, near Tottenham, with a tithe of our proposed labours only yet accomplished ; sorely convinced in spirit, that the Brucian enterprise was as yet too arduous for our young shoulders.

Not more refreshing to the thirsty curiosity of the traveller is 10 the tracing of some mighty waters up to their shallow fontlet, than it is to a pleased and candid reader to go back to the inexperienced essays, the first callow flights in authorship, of some established name in literature ; from the *Gnat* which preluded to the *Aeneid*, to the *Duck* which Samuel Johnson trod on.

15 In those days every Morning Paper, as an essential retainer to its establishment, kept an author, who was bound to furnish daily a quantum of witty paragraphs. Sixpence a joke — and it was thought pretty high too — was Dan Stuart's settled remuneration in these cases. The chat of the day, scandal, 20 but above all, *dress*, furnished the material. The length of no paragraph was to exceed seven lines. Shorter they might be, but they must be poignant.

A fashion of *flesh*, or rather *pink*-coloured hose for the ladies, luckily coming up at the juncture, when we were in 25 our probation for the place of Chief Jester to S.'s Paper, established our reputation in that line. We were pronounced a “capital hand.” O the conceits which we varied upon *red* in all its prismatic differences ! from the trite and obvious flower of Cytherea, to the flaming costume of the lady that 30 has her sitting upon “many waters.” Then there was the collateral topic of ankles. What an occasion to a truly chaste writer, like ourself, of touching that nice brink, and never yet tumbling over it, of a seemingly ever approximating something “not quite proper” ; while, like a skilful posture-master,

balancing betwixt decorums and their opposites, he keeps the line, from which a hair's-breadth deviation is destruction ; hovering in the confines of light and darkness, or where "both seem either" ; a hazy uncertain delicacy ; Autolycus-like in the Play, still putting off his expectant auditory with "Whoop, 5 do me no harm, good man !" But, above all, that conceit arrided us most at that time, and still tickles our midriff to remember, where, allusively to the flight of Astræa — *ultima Cælestam terras reliquit* — we pronounced — in reference to the stockings still — that MODESTY TAKING HER FINAL LEAVE OF 10 MORTALS, HER LAST BLUSH WAS VISIBLE IN HER ASCENT TO THE HEAVENS BY THE TRACT OF THE GLOWING INSTEP. This might be called the crowning conceit ; and was esteemed tolerable writing in those days.

But the fashion of jokes, with all other things, passes away ; 15 as did the transient mode which had so favoured us. The ankles of our fair friends in a few weeks began to reassume their whiteness, and left us scarce a leg to stand upon. Other female whims followed, but none, methought, so pregnant, so invitatory of shrewd conceits, and more than single meanings. 20

Somebody has said, that to swallow six cross-buns daily consecutively for a fortnight would surfeit the stoutest digestion. But to have to furnish as many jokes daily, and that not for a fortnight, but for a long twelvemonth, as we were constrained to do, was a little harder execution. "Man goeth forth to his 25 work until the evening" — from a reasonable hour in the morning, we presume it was meant. Now as our main occupation took us up from eight till five every day in the City ; and as our evening hours, at that time of life, had generally to do with anything rather than business, it follows, that the only 30 time we could spare for this manufactory of jokes — our supplementary livelihood, that supplied us in every want beyond mere bread and cheese — was exactly that part of the day which (as we have heard of No Man's Land) may be fitly

denominated No Man's Time ; that is, no time in which a man ought to be up and awake in. To speak more plainly, it is that time, of an hour, or an hour and a half's duration, in which a man, whose occasions call him up so preposterously, 5 has to wait for his breakfast.

O those headaches at dawn of day, when at five, or half-past five in summer, and not much later in the dark seasons, we were compelled to rise, having been perhaps not above four hours in bed — (for we were no go-to-beds with the lamb, 10 though we anticipated the lark oftentimes in her rising—we liked a parting cup at midnight, as all young men did before these effeminate times, and to have our friends about us—we were not constellated under Aquarius, that watery sign, and therefore incapable of Bacchus, cold, washy, bloodless—we 15 were none of your Basilian water-sponges, nor had taken our degrees at Mount Ague—we were right toping Capulets, jolly companions, we and they)— but to have to get up, as we have said before, curtailed of half our fair sleep, fasting, with only a dim vista of refreshing Bohea in the distance — to be necessi- 20 tated to rouse ourselves at the detestable rap of an old hag of a domestic, who seemed to take a diabolical pleasure in her announcement that it was “time to rise ;” and whose chappy knuckles we have often yearned to amputate, and string them up at our chamber door, to be a terror to all such unseasonable 25 rest-breakers in future—

“Facil” and sweet, as Virgil sings, had been the “descending” of the over-night, balmy the first sinking of the heavy head upon the pillow ; but to get up, as he goes on to say,

— revocare gradus, superasque evadere ad auras —

30 and to get up moreover to make jokes with malice prepended — there was the “labour,” — there the “work.”

No Egyptian taskmaster ever devised a slavery like to that, our slavery. No fractious operants ever turned out for half

the tyranny, which this necessity exercised upon us. Half-a-dozen jests in a day (bating Sundays too), why it seems nothing ! We make twice the number every day in our lives as a matter of course, and claim no Sabbatical exemptions. But then they come into our head. But when the head has to 5 go out to them — when the mountain must go to Mahomet —

Reader, try it for once, only for one short twelvemonth.

It was not every week that a fashion of pink stockings came up ; but mostly, instead of it, some rugged, untractable subject ; some topic impossible to be contorted into the risible ; 10 some feature, upon which no smile could play ; some flint, from which no process of ingenuity could procure a distillation. There they lay ; there your appointed tale of brick-making was set before you, which you must finish, with or without straw, as it happened. The craving dragon — *the 15 Public* — like him in Bel's temple — must be fed ; it expected its daily rations ; and Daniel, and ourselves, to do us justice, did the best we could on this side bursting him.

While we were wringing out coy sprightlinesses for the *Post*, and writhing under the toil of what is called “easy writing,” 20 Bob Allen, our *quondam* schoolfellow, was tapping his impracticable brains in a like service for the *Oracle*. Not that Robert troubled himself much about wit. If his paragraphs had a sprightly air about them, it was sufficient. He carried this nonchalance so far at last, that a matter of intelligence, and 25 that no very important one, was not seldom palmed upon his employers for a good jest ; for example sake — “*Walking yesterday morning casually down Snow Hill, who should we meet but Mr. Deputy Humphreys ! we rejoice to add, that the worthy Deputy appeared to enjoy a good state of health. We do not 30 remember ever to have seen him look better.*” This gentleman, so surprisingly met upon Snow Hill, from some peculiarities in gait or gesture, was a constant butt for mirth to the small paragraph-mongers of the day ; and our friend thought that

he might have his fling at him with the rest. We met A. in Holborn shortly after this extraordinary renounter, which he told with tears of satisfaction in his eyes, and chuckling at the anticipated effects of its announcement next day in the paper.

5 We did not quite comprehend where the wit of it lay at the time ; nor was it easy to be detected, when the thing came out, advantaged by type and letter-press. He had better have met anything that morning than a Common Councilman. His services were shortly after dispensed with, on the plea that his

10 paragraphs of late had been deficient in point. The one in question, it must be owned, had an air, in the opening especially, proper to awaken curiosity ; and the sentiment, or moral, wears the aspect of humanity, and good neighbourly feeling.

But somehow the conclusion was not judged altogether to

15 answer to the magnificent promise of the premises. We traced our friend's pen afterwards in the *True Briton*, the *Star*, the *Traveller*, — from all of which he was successively dismissed, the Proprietors having “no further occasion for his services.” Nothing was easier than to detect him. When wit

20 failed, or topics ran low, there constantly appeared the following — “*It is not generally known that the three Blue Balls at the Pawnbrokers' shops are the ancient arms of Lombardy. The Lombards were the first money-brokers in Europe.*” Bob has done more to set the public right on this important point

25 of blazonry, than the whole College of Heralds.

The appointment of a regular wit has long ceased to be a part of the economy of a Morning Paper. Editors find their own jokes, or do as well without them. Parson Este, and Topham, brought up the set custom of “witty paragraphs” first

30 in the *World*. Boaden was a reigning paragraphist in his day, and succeeded poor Allen in the *Oracle*. But, as we said, the fashion of jokes passes away ; and it would be difficult to discover in the Biographer of Mrs. Siddons, any traces of that vivacity and fancy which charmed the whole town at the

commencement of the present century. Even the prelusive delicacies of the present writer — the curt “Astræan allusion” — would be thought pedantic, and out of date, in these days.

From the office of the *Morning Post* (for we may as well exhaust our Newspaper Reminiscences at once) by change of property in the paper, we were transferred, mortifying exchange ! 5 to the office of the *Albion* Newspaper, late Rackstrow's Museum, in Fleet Street. What a transition — from a handsome apartment, from rose-wood desks, and silver inkstands, to an office — no office, but a *den* rather, but just redeemed from the occupation of dead monsters, of which it seemed redolent — from the centre of loyalty and fashion, to a focus of vulgarity and sedition ! Here in murky closet, inadequate from its square contents to the receipt of the two bodies of Editor, and humble paragraph-maker, together at one time, sat in the discharge of 10 his new Editorial functions (the “Bigod” of Elia) the redoubted 15 John Fenwick.

F., without a guinea in his pocket, and having left not many in the pockets of his friends whom he might command, had purchased (on tick doubtless) the whole and sole Editor- 20 ship, Proprietorship, with all the rights and titles (such as they were worth) of the *Albion*, from one Lovell ; of whom we know nothing, save that he had stood in the pillory for a libel on the Prince of Wales. With this hopeless concern — for it had been sinking ever since its commencement, and could now 25 reckon upon not more than a hundred subscribers — F. resolutely determined upon pulling down the Government in the first instance, and making both our fortunes by way of corollary. For seven weeks and more did this infatuated Democrat go about borrowing seven-shilling pieces, and lesser coin, to meet 30 the daily demands of the Stamp Office, which allowed no credit to publications of that side in politics. An outcast from politer bread, we attached our small talents to the forlorn fortunes of our friend. Our occupation now was to write treason.

Recollections of feelings — which were all that now remained from our first boyish heats kindled by the French Revolution, when if we were misled, we erred in the company of some, who are accounted very good men now — rather than any tendency 5 at this time to Republican doctrines — assisted us in assuming a style of writing, while the paper lasted, consonant in no very undertone to the right earnest fanaticism of F. Our cue was now to insinuate, rather than recommend, possible abdications. Blocks, axes, Whitehall tribunals, were covered with flowers of 10 so cunning a periphrasis — as Mr. Bayes says, never naming the *thing* directly — that the keen eye of an Attorney-General was insufficient to detect the lurking snake among them. There were times, indeed, when we sighed for our more gentleman-like occupation under Stuart. But with change of masters it 15 is ever change of service. Already one paragraph, and another, as we learned afterwards from a gentleman at the Treasury, had begun to be marked at that office, with a view of its being submitted at least to the attention of the proper Law Officers — when an unlucky, or rather lucky epigram from our pen, aimed 20 at Sir J——s M——h, who was on the eve of departing for India to reap the fruits of his apostasy, as F. pronounced it (it is hardly worth particularizing), happening to offend the nice sense of Lord, or, as he then delighted to be called, Citizen Stanhope, deprived F. at once of the last hopes of a guinea 25 from the last patron that had stuck by us; and breaking up our establishment, left us to the safe, but somewhat mortifying, neglect of the Crown Lawyers. — It was about this time, or a little earlier, that Dan Stuart made that curious confession to us, that he had “never deliberately walked into an Exhibition 30 at Somerset House in his life.”

CRITICAL ESSAYS

XXXIV. ON THE TRAGEDIES OF SHAKESPEARE

CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR FITNESS FOR STAGE REPRESENTATION

TAKING a turn the other day in the Abbey, I was struck with the affected attitude of a figure, which I do not remember to have seen before, and which upon examination proved to be a whole-length of the celebrated Mr. Garrick. Though I would not go so far with some good Catholics abroad as to 5 shut players altogether out of consecrated ground, yet I own I was not a little scandalized at the introduction of theatrical airs and gestures into a place set apart to remind us of the saddest realities. Going nearer, I found inscribed under this harlequin figure the following lines : —

To paint fair Nature, by divine command,
Her magic pencil in his glowing hand,
A Shakespeare rose ; then, to expand his fame
Wide o'er this breathing world, a Garrick came.
Though sunk in death the forms the Poet drew,
The Actor's genius made them breathe anew ;
Though, like the bard himself, in night they lay,
Immortal Garrick call'd them back to day :
And till Eternity with power sublime
Shall mark the mortal hour of hoary Time,
Shakespeare and Garrick like twin-stars shall shine,
And earth irradiate with a beam divine.

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It would be an insult to my readers' understandings to attempt any thing like a criticism on this farrago of false thoughts and nonsense. But the reflection it led me into was a kind of wonder, how from the days of the actor here celebrated to our own, it should have been the fashion to compliment every performer in his turn, that has had the luck to please the town in any of the great characters of Shakespeare, with the notion of possessing a *mind congenial with the poet's*: how people should come thus unaccountably to confound the power of originating poetical images and conceptions with the faculty of being able to read or recite the same when put into words;¹ or what connexion that absolute mastery over the heart and soul of man, which a great dramatic poet possesses, has with those low tricks upon the eye and ear, which a player by observing a few general effects, which some common passion, as grief, anger, &c., usually has upon the gestures and exterior, can so easily compass. To know the internal workings and movements of a great mind, of an Othello or a Hamlet for instance, the *when* and the *why* and the *how far* they should be moved; to what pitch a passion is becoming; to give the reins and to pull in the curb exactly at the moment when the drawing in or the slackening is most graceful; seems to demand a reach of intellect of a vastly different extent from that which is employed upon the bare imitation of the signs of these passions in the countenance or gesture, which signs are usually observed to be most lively and emphatic in the weaker sort of minds, and which signs can after all but indicate

¹ It is observable that we fall into this confusion only in *dramatic* recitations. We never dream that the gentleman who reads Lucretius in public with great applause, is therefore a great poet and philosopher; nor do we find that Tom Davies, the bookseller, who is recorded to have recited the *Paradise Lost* better than any man in England in his day (though I cannot help thinking there must be some mistake in this tradition) was therefore, by his intimate friends, set upon a level with Milton.

some passion, as I said before, anger, or grief, generally ; but of the motives and grounds of the passion, wherein it differs from the same passion in low and vulgar natures, of these the actor can give no more idea by his face or gesture than the eye (without a metaphor) can speak, or the muscles utter intelligible sounds. But such is the instantaneous nature of the impressions which we take in at the eye and ear at a playhouse, compared with the slow apprehension oftentimes of the understanding in reading, that we are apt not only to sink the play-writer in the consideration which we pay to the actor, but even 10 to identify in our minds in a perverse manner, the actor with the character which he represents. It is difficult for a frequent play-goer to disembarass the idea of Hamlet from the person and voice of Mr. K. We speak of Lady Macbeth, while we are in reality thinking of Mrs. S. Nor is this confusion incidental alone to unlettered persons, who, not possessing the advantage of reading, are necessarily dependent upon the stage-player for all the pleasure which they can receive from the drama, and to whom the very idea of *what an author is* cannot be made comprehensible without some pain and perplexity of 20 mind : the error is one from which persons otherwise not meanly lettered, find it almost impossible to extricate themselves.

Never let me be so ungrateful as to forget the very high degree of satisfaction which I received some years back from seeing for the first time a tragedy of Shakespeare performed, 25 in which those two great performers sustained the principal parts. It seemed to embody and realize conceptions which had hitherto assumed no distinct shape. But dearly do we pay all our life after for this juvenile pleasure, this sense of distinctness. When the novelty is past, we find to our cost 30 that, instead of realizing an idea, we have only materialized and brought down a fine vision to the standard of flesh and blood. We have let go a dream, in quest of an unattainable substance,

How cruelly this operates upon the mind, to have its free conceptions thus cramped and pressed down to the measure of a strait-lacing actuality, may be judged from that delightful sensation of freshness, with which we turn to those plays of 5 Shakespeare which have escaped being performed, and to those passages in the acting plays of the same writer which have happily been left out in the performance. How far the very custom of hearing anything *spouted*, withers and blows upon a fine passage, may be seen in those speeches from Henry the 10 Fifth, &c., which are current in the mouths of school-boys from their being to be found in *Enfield Speakers*, and such kind of books. I confess myself utterly unable to appreciate that celebrated soliloquy in Hamlet, beginning "To be or not to be," or to tell whether it be good, bad, or indifferent, it has 15 been so handled and pawed about by declamatory boys and men, and torn so inhumanly from its living place and principle of continuity in the play, till it is become to me a perfect dead member.

It may seem a paradox, but I cannot help being of opinion 20 that the plays of Shakespeare are less calculated for performance on a stage, than those of almost any other dramatist whatever. Their distinguishing excellence is a reason that they should be so. There is so much in them, which comes not under the province of acting, with which eye, and tone, 25 and gesture, have nothing to do.

The glory of the scenic art is to personate passion, and the turns of passion; and the more coarse and palpable the passion is, the more hold upon the eyes and ears of the spectators the performer obviously possesses. For this reason, 30 scolding scenes, scenes where two persons talk themselves into a fit of fury, and then in a surprising manner talk themselves out of it again, have always been the most popular upon our stage. And the reason is plain, because the spectators are here most palpably appealed to, they are the proper judges in

this war of words, they are the legitimate ring that should be formed round such "intellectual prize-fighters." Talking is the direct object of the imitation here. But in all the best dramas, and in Shakespeare above all, how obvious it is, that the form of *speaking*, whether it be in soliloquy or dialogue, is 5 only a medium, and often a highly artificial one, for putting the reader or spectator into possession of that knowledge of the inner structure and workings of mind in a character, which he could otherwise never have arrived at *in that form of composition* by any gift short of intuition. We do here as we do 10 with novels written in the *epistolary form*. How many improprieties, perfect solecisms in letter-writing, do we put up with in Clarissa and other books, for the sake of the delight which that form upon the whole gives us.

But the practice of stage representation reduces everything 15 to a controversy of elocution. Every character, from the boisterous blasphemings of Bajazet to the shrinking timidity of womanhood, must play the orator. The love-dialogues of Romeo and Juliet, those silver-sweet sounds of lovers' tongues by night; the more intimate and sacred sweetness of nuptial 20 colloquy between an Othello or a Posthumus with their married wives, all those delicacies which are so delightful in the reading, as when we read of those youthful dalliances in Paradise —

As beseem'd
Fair couple link'd in happy nuptial league,
Alone :

25

by the inherent fault of stage representation, how are these things sullied and turned from their very nature by being exposed to a large assembly; when such speeches as Imogen addresses to her lord, come drawing out of the mouth of a 30 hired actress, whose courtship, though nominally addressed to the personated Posthumus, is manifestly aimed at the spectators, who are to judge of her endearments and her returns of love.

The character of Hamlet is perhaps that by which, since the days of Betterton, a succession of popular performers have had the greatest ambition to distinguish themselves. The length of the part may be one of their reasons. But for the character 5 itself, we find it in a play, and therefore we judge it a fit subject of dramatic representation. The play itself abounds in maxims and reflexions beyond any other, and therefore we consider it as a proper vehicle for conveying moral instruction. But Hamlet himself—what does he suffer meanwhile 10 by being dragged forth as a public schoolmaster, to give lectures to the crowd ! Why, nine parts in ten of what Hamlet does, are transactions between himself and his moral sense, they are the effusions of his solitary musing, which he retires to holes and corners and the most sequestered parts of the 15 palace to pour forth ; or rather, they are the silent meditations with which his bosom is bursting, reduced to *words* for the sake of the reader, who must else remain ignorant of what is passing there. These profound sorrows, these light-and-noise-abhorring ruminations, which the tongue scarce dares utter to 20 deaf walls and chambers, how can they be represented by a gesticulating actor, who comes and mouths them out before an audience, making four hundred people his confidants at once ? I say not that it is the fault of the actor so to do ; he must pronounce them *ore rotundo*, he must accompany them with 25 his eye, he must insinuate them into his auditory by some trick of eye, tone, or gesture, or he fails. *He must be thinking all the while of his appearance, because he knows that all the while the spectators are judging of it.* And this is the way to represent the shy, negligent, retiring Hamlet.

30 It is true that there is no other mode of conveying a vast quantity of thought and feeling to a great portion of the audience, who otherwise would never learn it for themselves by reading, and the intellectual acquisition gained this way may, for aught I know, be inestimable ; but I am not arguing

that Hamlet should not be acted, but how much Hamlet is made another thing by being acted. I have heard much of the wonders which Garrick performed in this part; but as I never saw him, I must have leave to doubt whether the representation of such a character came within the province of his art. 5 Those who tell me of him, speak of his eye, of the magic of his eye, and of his commanding voice: physical properties, vastly desirable in an actor, and without which he can never insinuate meaning into an auditory,—but what have they to do with Hamlet? what have they to do with intellect? In 10 fact, the things aimed at in theatrical representation, are to arrest the spectator's eye upon the form and the gesture, and so to gain a more favourable hearing to what is spoken: it is not what the character is, but how he looks; not what he says, but how he speaks it. I see no reason to think that if the 15 play of Hamlet were written over again by some such writer as Banks or Lillo, retaining the process of the story, but totally omitting all the poetry of it, all the divine features of Shakespeare, his stupendous intellect; and only taking care to give us enough of passionate dialogue, which Banks or Lillo were 20 never at a loss to furnish; I see not how the effect could be much different upon an audience, nor how the actor has it in his power to represent Shakespeare to us differently from his representation of Banks or Lillo. Hamlet would still be a youthful accomplished prince, and must be gracefully personated; he might be puzzled in his mind, wavering in his conduct, seemingly cruel to Ophelia, he might see a ghost, and start at it, and address it kindly when he found it to be his father; all this in the poorest and most homely language of the servilest creeper after nature that ever consulted the 25 palate of an audience; without troubling Shakespeare for the matter: and I see not but there would be room for all the power which an actor has, to display itself. All the passions and changes of passion might remain; for those are much less

difficult to write or act than is thought ; it is a trick easy to be attained, it is but rising or falling a note or two in the voice, a whisper with a significant foreboding look to announce its approach, and so contagious the counterfeit appearance of any 5 emotion is, that let the words be what they will, the look and tone shall carry it off and make it pass for deep skill in the passions.

It is common for people to talk of Shakespeare's plays being *so natural*, that everybody can understand him. They are 10 natural indeed, they are grounded deep in nature, so deep that the depth of them lies out of the reach of most of us. You shall hear the same persons say that George Barnwell is very natural, and Othello is very natural, that they are both very deep ; and to them they are the same kind of thing. At 15 the one they sit and shed tears, because a good sort of young man is tempted by a naughty woman to commit *a trifling peccadillo*, the murder of an uncle or so,¹ that is all, and so comes to an untimely end, which is *so moving* ; and at the other, because a blackamoor in a fit of jealousy kills his innocent white wife : and the odds are that ninety-nine out of a hundred would willingly behold the same catastrophe happen to both the heroes, and have thought the rope more due to

¹ If this note could hope to meet the eye of any of the Managers, I would entreat and beg of them, in the name of both the Galleries, that this insult upon the morality of the common people of London should cease to be eternally repeated in the holiday weeks. Why are the 'Prentices of this famous and well-governed city, instead of an amusement, to be treated over and over again with a nauseous sermon of George Barnwell ? Why at the end of their vistoes are we to place the gallows ? Were I an uncle, I should not much like a nephew of mine to have such an example placed before his eyes. It is really making uncle-murder too trivial to exhibit it as done upon such slight motives ; — it is attributing too much to such characters as Millwood ; it is putting things into the heads of good young men, which they would never otherwise have dreamed of. Uncles that think anything of their lives, should fairly petition the Chamberlain against it.

Othello than to Barnwell. For of the texture of Othello's mind, the inward construction marvellously laid open with all its strengths and weaknesses, its heroic confidences and its human misgivings, its agonies of hate springing from the depths of love, they see no more than the spectators at a 5 cheaper rate, who pay their pennies apiece to look through the man's telescope in Leicester Fields, see into the inward plot and topography of the moon. Some dim thing or other they see, they see an actor personating a passion, of grief, or anger, for instance, and they recognize it as a copy of the 10 usual external effects of such passions; or at least as being true to *that symbol of the emotion which passes current at the theatre for it*, for it is often no more than that: but of the grounds of the passion, its correspondence to a great or heroic nature, which is the only worthy object of tragedy, — that 15 common auditors know anything of this, or can have any such notions dinned into them by the mere strength of an actor's lungs, — that apprehensions foreign to them should be thus infused into them by storm, I can neither believe, nor understand how it can be possible. 20

We talk of Shakespeare's admirable observation of life, when we should feel, that not from a petty inquisition into those cheap and every-day characters which surrounded him, as they surround us, but from his own mind, which was, to borrow a phrase of Ben Jonson's, the very "sphere of humanity," he 25 fetched those images of virtue and of knowledge, of which every one of us recognizing a part, think we comprehend in our natures the whole; and oftentimes mistake the powers which he positively creates in us, for nothing more than indigenous faculties of our own minds, which only waited the application of corresponding virtues in him to return a full and clear echo of the same. 30

To return to Hamlet. — Among the distinguishing features of that wonderful character, one of the most interesting (yet

painful) is that soreness of mind which makes him treat the intrusions of Polonius with harshness, and that asperity which he puts on in his interviews with Ophelia. These tokens of an unhinged mind (if they be not mixed in the latter case 5 with a profound artifice of love, to alienate Ophelia by affected discourtesies, so to prepare her mind for the breaking off of that loving intercourse, which can no longer find a place amidst business so serious as that which he has to do) are parts of his character, which to reconcile with our admiration 10 of Hamlet, the most patient consideration of his situation is no more than necessary ; they are what we *forgive afterwards*, and explain by the whole of his character, but *at the time* they are harsh and unpleasant. Yet such is the actor's necessity of giving strong blows to the audience, that I have never seen a 15 player in this character, who did not exaggerate and strain to the utmost these ambiguous features, — these temporary deformities in the character. They make him express a vulgar scorn at Polonius which utterly degrades his gentility, and which no explanation can render palatable ; they make him 20 show contempt, and curl up the nose at Ophelia's father, — contempt in its very grossest and most hateful form ; but they get applause by it : it is natural, people say ; that is, the words are scornful, and the actor expresses scorn, and that they can 25 judge of : but why so much scorn, and of that sort, they never think of asking.

So to Ophelia. — All the Hamlets that I have ever seen, rant and rave at her as if she had committed some great crime, and the audience are highly pleased, because the words of the part are satirical, and they are enforced by the strongest 30 expression of satirical indignation of which the face and voice are capable. But then, whether Hamlet is likely to have put on such brutal appearances to a lady whom he loved so dearly, is never thought on. The truth is, that in all such deep affections as had subsisted between Hamlet and Ophelia, there is

a stock of *supererogatory love* (if I may venture to use the expression), which in any great grief of heart, especially where that which preys upon the mind cannot be communicated, confers a kind of indulgence upon the grieved party to express itself, even to its heart's dearest object, in the language of a 5 temporary alienation ; but it is not alienation, it is a distraction purely, and so it always makes itself to be felt by that object : it is not anger, but grief assuming the appearance of anger, — love awkwardly counterfeiting hate, as sweet countenances when they try to frown : but such sternness and fierce disgust 10 as Hamlet is made to show, is no counterfeit, but the real face of absolute aversion,—of irreconcilable alienation. It may be said he puts on the madman ; but then he should only so far put on this counterfeit lunacy as his own real distraction will give him leave ; that is, incompletely, imperfectly ; not 15 in that confirmed, practised way, like a master of his art, or as Dame Quickly would say, “like one of those harlotry players.”

I mean no disrespect to any actor, but the sort of pleasure which Shakespeare's plays give in the acting seems to me not 20 at all to differ from that which the audience receive from those of other writers ; and, *they being in themselves essentially so different from all others*, I must conclude that there is something in the nature of acting which levels all distinctions. And in fact, who does not speak indifferently of the Gamester and 25 of Macbeth as fine stage performances, and praise the Mrs. Beverley in the same way as the Lady Macbeth of Mrs. S.? Belvidera, and Calista, and Isabella, and Euphrasia, are they less liked than Imogen, or than Juliet, or than Desdemona? Are they not spoken of and remembered in the same way? 30 Is not the female performer as great (as they call it) in one as in the other? Did not Garrick shine, and was he not ambitious of shining in every drawing tragedy that his wretched day produced,—the productions of the Hills and the Murphys

and the Browns,—and shall he have that honour to dwell in our minds for ever as an inseparable concomitant with Shakespeare? A kindred mind! O who can read that affecting sonnet of Shakespeare which alludes to his profession as a player:—

5 Oh for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
 The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
 That did not better for my life provide
 Than public means which public manners breeds —
 Thence comes it that my name receives a brand ;
 10 And almost thence my nature is subdued
 To what it works in, like the dyer's hand —

Or that other confession:—

Alas! 't is true, I have gone here and there,
 And made myself a motley to the view,
 15 Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear —

Who can read these instances of jealous self-watchfulness in our sweet Shakespeare, and dream of any congeniality between him and one that, by every tradition of him, appears to have been as mere a player as ever existed; to have had his mind
 20 tainted with the lowest players' vices,—envy and jealousy, and miserable cravings after applause; one who in the exercise of his profession was jealous even of the women-performers that stood in his way; a manager full of managerial tricks and stratagems and finesse: that any resemblance should be
 25 dreamed of between him and Shakespeare,—Shakespeare who, in the plenitude and consciousness of his own powers, could with that noble modesty, which we can neither imitate nor appreciate, express himself thus of his own sense of his own defects:—

30 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
 Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd ;
 Desiring *this man's art, and that man's scope.*

I am almost disposed to deny to Garrick the merit of being an admirer of Shakespeare. A true lover of his excellencies he certainly was not ; for would any true lover of them have admitted into his matchless scenes such ribald trash as Tate and Cibber, and the rest of them, that

5

With their darkness durst affront his light,

have foisted into the acting plays of Shakespeare? I believe it impossible that he could have had a proper reverence for Shakespeare, and have condescended to go through that interpolated scene in Richard the Third, in which Richard tries to break his wife's heart by telling her he loves another woman, and says, "if she survives this she is immortal." Yet I doubt not he delivered this vulgar stuff with as much anxiety of emphasis as any of the genuine parts : and for acting, it is as well calculated as any. But we have seen the part of Richard lately produce great fame to an actor by his manner of playing it, and it lets us into the secret of acting, and of popular judgments of Shakespeare derived from acting. Not one of the spectators who have witnessed Mr. C.'s exertions in that part, but has come away with a proper conviction that Richard is a very wicked man, and kills little children in their beds, with something like the pleasure which the giants and ogres in children's books are represented to have taken in that practice ; moreover, that he is very close and shrewd and devilish cunning, for you could see that by his eye.

25

But is in fact this the impression we have in reading the Richard of Shakespeare? Do we feel anything like disgust, as we do at that butcher-like representation of him that passes for him on the stage? A horror at his crimes blends with the effect which we feel, but how is it qualified, how is it carried off, by the rich intellect which he displays, his resources, his wit, his buoyant spirits, his vast knowledge and insight into characters, the poetry of his part — not an atom of all which

is made perceptible in Mr. C.'s way of acting it. Nothing but his crimes, his actions, is visible ; they are prominent and startling ; the murderer stands out, but where is the lofty genius, the man of vast capacity, — the profound, the witty, the accomplished

5 Richard ?

The truth is, the Characters of Shakespeare are so much the objects of meditation rather than of interest or curiosity as to their actions, that while we are reading any of his great criminal characters, — Macbeth, Richard, even Iago, — we think 10 not so much of the crimes which they commit, as of the ambition, the aspiring spirit, the intellectual activity, which prompts them to overleap those moral fences. Barnwell is a wretched murderer ; there is a certain fitness between his neck and the rope ; he is the legitimate heir to the gallows ; nobody who 15 thinks at all can think of any alleviating circumstances in his case to make him a fit object of mercy. Or to take an instance from the higher tragedy, what else but a mere assassin is Glenalvon ! Do we think of anything but of the crime which he commits, and the rack which he deserves ? That is 20 all which we really think about him. Whereas in corresponding characters in Shakespeare so little do the actions comparatively affect us, that while the impulses, the inner mind in all its perverted greatness, solely seems real and is exclusively attended to, the crime is comparatively nothing. But when 25 we see these things represented, the acts which they do are comparatively everything, their impulses nothing. The state of sublime emotion into which we are elevated by those images of night and horror which Macbeth is made to utter, that solemn prelude with which he entertains the time till the bell 30 shall strike which is to call him to murder Duncan, — when we no longer read it in a book, when we have given up that vantage-ground of abstraction which reading possesses over seeing, and come to see a man in his bodily shape before our eyes actually preparing to commit a murder, if the acting be

true and impressive, as I have witnessed it in Mr. K.'s performance of that part, the painful anxiety about the act, the natural longing to prevent it while it yet seems unperpetrated, the too close pressing semblance of reality, give a pain and an uneasiness which totally destroy all the delight which the words in the book convey, where the deed doing never presses upon us with the painful sense of presence: it rather seems to belong to history,—to something past and inevitable, if it has anything to do with time at all. The sublime images, the poetry alone, is that which is present to our minds in the 10 reading.

So to see Lear acted,—to see an old man tottering about the stage with a walking-stick, turned out of doors by his daughters in a rainy night, has nothing in it but what is painful and disgusting. We want to take him into shelter and relieve him. 15 That is all the feeling which the acting of Lear ever produced in me. But the Lear of Shakespeare cannot be acted. The contemptible machinery by which they mimic the storm which he goes out in, is not more inadequate to represent the horrors of the real elements, than any actor can be to represent Lear: 20 they might more easily propose to personate the Satan of Milton upon a stage, or one of Michael Angelo's terrible figures. The greatness of Lear is not in corporal dimension, but in intellectual: the explosions of his passion are terrible as a volcano: they are storms turning up and disclosing to the bottom that 25 sea his mind, with all its vast riches. It is his mind which is laid bare. This case of flesh and blood seems too insignificant to be thought on; even as he himself neglects it. On the stage we see nothing but corporal infirmities and weakness, the impotence of rage; while we read it, we see not Lear, 30 but we are Lear,—we are in his mind, we are sustained by a grandeur which baffles the malice of daughters and storms; in the aberrations of his reason, we discover a mighty irregular power of reasoning, immethodized from the ordinary purposes

of life, but exerting its powers, as the wind blows where it listeth, at will upon the corruptions and abuses of mankind. What have looks, or tones, to do with that sublime identification of his age with that of the *heavens themselves*, when in 5 his reproaches to them for conniving at the injustice of his children, he reminds them that "they themselves are old"? What gesture shall we appropriate to this? What has the voice or the eye to do with such things? But the play is beyond all art, as the tamperings with it show: it is too hard and 10 stony; it must have love-scenes, and a happy ending. It is not enough that Cordelia is a daughter, she must shine as a lover too. Tate has put his hook in the nostrils of this Leviathan, for Garrick and his followers, the showmen of the scene, to draw the mighty beast about more easily. A happy ending! 15 — as if the living martyrdom that Lear had gone through,— the flaying of his feelings alive, did not make a fair dismissal from the stage of life the only decorous thing for him. If he is to live and be happy after, if he could sustain this world's burden after, why all this pudder and preparation,— why torment us with all this unnecessary sympathy? As if the child- 20 ish pleasure of getting his gilt robes and sceptre again could tempt him to act over again his misused station,— as if at his years, and with his experience, anything was left but to die.

Lear is essentially impossible to be represented on a stage. 25 But how many dramatic personages are there in Shakespeare, which though more tractable and feasible (if I may so speak) than Lear, yet from some circumstance, some adjunct to their character, are improper to be shown to our bodily eye. Othello for instance. Nothing can be more soothing, more flattering 30 to the nobler parts of our natures, than to read of a young Venetian lady of highest extraction, through the force of love and from a sense of merit in him whom she loved, laying aside every consideration of kindred, and country, and colour, and wedding with a *coal-black Moor*— (for such he is represented,

in the imperfect state of knowledge respecting foreign countries in those days, compared with our own, or in compliance with popular notions, though the Moors are now well enough known to be by many shades less unworthy of a white woman's fancy) — it is the perfect triumph of virtue over accidents, of 5 the imagination over the senses. She sees Othello's colour in his mind. But upon the stage, when the imagination is no longer the ruling faculty, but we are left to our poor unassisted senses, I appeal to every one that has seen Othello played, whether he did not, on the contrary, sink Othello's mind in 10 his colour; whether he did not find something extremely revolting in the courtship and wedded caresses of Othello and Desdemona; and whether the actual sight of the thing did not over-weigh all that beautiful compromise which we make in reading; — and the reason it should do so is obvious, because 15 there is just so much reality presented to our senses as to give a perception of disagreement, with not enough of belief in the internal motives, — all that which is unseen, — to overpower and reconcile the first and obvious prejudices.¹ What we see upon a stage is body and bodily action; what we are conscious 20 of in reading is almost exclusively the mind, and its movements: and this I think may sufficiently account for the very different sort of delight with which the same play so often affects us in the reading and the seeing.

¹ The error of supposing that because Othello's colour does not offend us in the reading, it should also not offend us in the seeing, is just such a fallacy as supposing that an Adam and Eve in a picture shall affect us just as they do in the poem. But in the poem we for a while have Paradisaical senses given us, which vanish when we see a man and his wife without clothes in the picture. The painters themselves feel this, as is apparent by the awkward shifts they have recourse to, to make them look not quite naked; by a sort of prophetic anachronism antedating the invention of fig-leaves. So in the reading of the play, we see with Desdemona's eyes; in the seeing of it, we are forced to look with our own.

It requires little reflection to perceive, that if those characters in Shakespeare which are within the precincts of nature, have yet something in them which appeals too exclusively to the imagination, to admit of their being made objects to 5 the senses without suffering a change and a diminution,— that still stronger the objection must lie against representing another line of characters, which Shakespeare has introduced to give a wildness and a supernatural elevation to his scenes, as if to remove them still farther from that assimilation to common 10 life in which their excellence is vulgarly supposed to consist.

When we read the incantations of those terrible beings the Witches in Macbeth, though some of the ingredients of their hellish composition savour of the grotesque, yet is the effect upon us other than the most serious and appalling that can be 15 imagined? Do we not feel spell-bound as Macbeth was? Can any mirth accompany a sense of their presence? We might as well laugh under a consciousness of the principle of Evil himself being truly and really present with us. But attempt to bring these beings on to a stage, and you turn them instantly 20 into so many old women, that men and children are to laugh at. Contrary to the old saying, that "seeing is believing," the sight actually destroys the faith: and the mirth in which we indulge at their expense, when we see these creatures upon a stage, seems to be a sort of indemnification which we make to 25 ourselves for the terror which they put us in when reading made them an object of belief,— when we surrendered up our reason to the poet, as children to their nurses and their elders; and we laugh at our fears, as children who thought they saw something in the dark, triumph when the bringing in of a candle 30 discovers the vanity of their fears. For this exposure of supernatural agents upon a stage is truly bringing in a candle to expose their own delusiveness. It is the solitary taper and the book that generates a faith in these terrors: a ghost by chandelier light, and in good company, deceives no spectators,

— a ghost that can be measured by the eye, and his human dimensions made out at leisure. The sight of a well-lighted house, and a well-dressed audience, shall arm the most nervous child against any apprehensions : as Tom Brown says of the impenetrable skin of Achilles with his impenetrable armour 5 over it, “Bully Dawson would have fought the devil with such advantages.”

Much has been said, and deservedly, in reprobation of the vile mixture which Dryden has thrown into the *Tempest* : doubtless without some such vicious alloy, the impure ears 10 of that age would never have sate out to hear so much innocence of love as is contained in the sweet courtship of Ferdinand and Miranda. But is the *Tempest* of Shakespeare at all a subject for stage representation ? It is one thing to read of an enchanter, and to believe the wondrous tale while we are 15 reading it ; but to have a conjuror brought before us in his conjuring-gown, with his spirits about him, which none but himself and some hundred of favoured spectators before the curtain are supposed to see, involves such a quantity of the *hateful incredible*, that all our reverence for the author cannot 20 hinder us from perceiving such gross attempts upon the senses to be in the highest degree childish and inefficient. Spirits and fairies cannot be represented, they cannot even be painted, — they can only be believed. But the elaborate and anxious provision of scenery, which the luxury of the age demands, in 25 these cases works a quite contrary effect to what is intended. That which in comedy, or plays of familiar life, adds so much to the life of the imitation, in plays which appeal to the higher faculties, positively destroys the illusion which it is introduced to aid. A parlour or a drawing-room, — a library opening into 30 a garden, — a garden with an alcove in it, — a street, or the piazza of Covent Garden, does well enough in a scene ; we are content to give as much credit to it as it demands ; or rather, we think little about it, — it is little more than reading at the

top of a page, "Scene, a Garden"; we do not imagine ourselves there, but we readily admit the imitation of familiar objects. But to think by the help of painted trees and caverns, which we know to be painted, to transport our minds to Prospero, 5 and his island and his lonely cell;¹ or by the aid of a fiddle dexterously thrown in, in an interval of speaking, to make us believe that we hear those supernatural noises of which the isle was full: — the Orrery Lecturer at the Haymarket might as well hope, by his musical glasses cleverly stationed out of 10 sight behind his apparatus, to make us believe that we do indeed hear the crystal spheres ring out that chime, which if it were to inwrap our fancy long, Milton thinks,

Time would run back and fetch the age of gold,
And speckled vanity
Would sicken soon and die,
And leprous Sin would melt from earthly mould;
Yea Hell itself would pass away,
And leave its dolorous mansions to the peering day.

The Garden of Eden, with our first parents in it, is not more 20 impossible to be shown on a stage, than the Enchanted Isle, with its no less interesting and innocent first settlers.

The subject of Scenery is closely connected with that of the Dresses, which are so anxiously attended to on our stage. I remember the last time I saw Macbeth played, the discrepancy 25 I felt at the changes of garment which he varied, — the shiftings and re-shiftings, like a Romish priest at mass. The luxury of stage-improvements, and the importunity of the public eye, require this. The coronation robe of the Scottish monarch

¹ It will be said these things are done in pictures. But pictures and scenes are very different things. Painting is a world of itself, but in scene-painting there is the attempt to deceive; and there is the discordancy, never to be got over, between painted scenes and real people.

was fairly a counterpart to that which our King wears when he goes to the Parliament-house,— just so full and cumbersome, and set out with ermine and pearls. And if things must be represented, I see not what to find fault with in this. But in reading, what robe are we conscious of? Some dim images 5 of royalty—a crown and sceptre, may float before our eyes, but who shall describe the fashion of it? Do we see in our mind's eye what Webb or any other robe-maker could pattern? This is the inevitable consequence of imitating everything, to make all things natural. Whereas the reading of a tragedy is 10 a fine abstraction. It presents to the fancy just so much of external appearances as to make us feel that we are among flesh and blood, while by far the greater and better part of our imagination is employed upon the thoughts and internal machinery of the character. But in acting, scenery, dress, 15 the most contemptible things, call upon us to judge of their naturalness.

Perhaps it would be no bad similitude, to liken the pleasure which we take in seeing one of these fine plays acted, compared with that quiet delight which we find in the reading of 20 it, to the different feelings with which a reviewer, and a man that is not a reviewer, reads a fine poem. The accursed critical habit,— the being called upon to judge and pronounce, must make it quite a different thing to the former. In seeing these plays acted, we are affected just as judges. When Hamlet 25 compares the two pictures of Gertrude's first and second husband, who wants to see the pictures? But in the acting, a miniature must be fugged out; which we know not to be the picture, but only to show how finely a miniature may be represented. This showing of everything, levels all things: it 30 makes tricks, bows, and curtseys, of importance. Mrs. S. never got more fame by anything than by the manner in which she dismisses the guests in the banquet-scene in Macbeth: it is as much remembered as any of her thrilling tones or impressive

looks. But does such a trifle as this enter into the imaginations of the reader of that wild and wonderful scene? Does not the mind dismiss the feasters as rapidly as it can? Does it care about the gracefulness of the doing it? But by acting, 5 and judging of acting, all these non-essentials are raised into an importance, injurious to the main interest of the play.

I have confined my observations to the tragic parts of Shakespeare. It would be no very difficult task to extend the inquiry to his comedies; and to show why Falstaff, Shallow, 10 Sir Hugh Evans, and the rest are equally incompatible with stage representation. The length to which this Essay has run, will make it, I am afraid, sufficiently distasteful to the Amateurs of the Theatre, without going any deeper into the subject at present.

XXXV. NOTES ON THE ELIZABETHAN AND OTHER DRAMATISTS

PREFACE TO "SPECIMENS OF THE ENGLISH DRAMATIC POETS," PUBLISHED IN 1808

15 MORE than a third part of the following specimens are from plays which are to be found only in the British Museum and in some scarce private libraries. The rest are from Dodsley's and Hawkins's collections, and the works of Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Massinger.

20 I have chosen wherever I could to give entire scenes, and in some instances successive scenes, rather than to string together single passages and detached beauties, which I have always found wearisome in the reading in selections of this nature.

To every extract is prefixed an explanatory head, sufficient 25 to make it intelligible with the help of some trifling omissions. Where a line or more was obscure, as having reference to

something that had gone before, which would have asked more time to explain than its consequence in the scene seemed to deserve, I have had no hesitation in leaving the line or passage out. Sometimes where I have met with a superfluous character, which seemed to burthen without throwing any light upon the scene, I have ventured to dismiss it altogether. I have expunged without ceremony all that which the writers had better never have written, that forms the objection so often repeated to the promiscuous reading of Fletcher, Massinger, and some others. 5

The kind of extracts which I have sought after have been, 10 not so much passages of wit and humour, though the old plays are rich in such, as scenes of passion, sometimes of the deepest quality, interesting situations, serious descriptions, that which is more nearly allied to poetry than to wit, and to tragic rather than to comic poetry. The plays which I have made 15 choice of have been, with few exceptions, those which treat of human life and manners, rather than masques, and Arcadian pastorals, with their train of abstractions, unimpassioned deities, passionate mortals, Claius, and Medorus, and Amin-tas, and Amarillis. My leading design has been, to illustrate 20 what may be called the moral sense of our ancestors; to show in what manner they felt, when they placed themselves by the power of imagination in trying situations, in the conflicts of duty and passion, or the strife of contending duties; what sort of loves and enmities theirs were; how their griefs were 25 tempered, and their full-swoln joys abated: how much of Shakespeare shines in the great men his contemporaries, and how far in his divine mind and manners he surpassed them and all mankind.

Another object which I had in making these selections was, 30 to bring together the most admired scenes in Fletcher and Massinger, in the estimation of the world the only dramatic poets of that age who are entitled to be considered after Shakespeare, and to exhibit them in the same volume with the

more impressive scenes of old Marlowe, Heywood, Tourneur, Webster, Ford, and others, to show what we have slighted, while beyond all proportion we have cried up one or two favourite names.

5 The specimens are not accompanied with anything in the shape of biographical notices.¹ I had nothing of consequence to add to the slight sketches in Dodsley and the *Biographia Dramatica*, and I was unwilling to swell the volume with mere transcription. The reader will not fail to observe from the 10 frequent instances of two or more persons joining in the composition of the same play (the noble practice of those times), that of most of the writers contained in these selections it may be strictly said, that they were contemporaries. The whole period, from the middle of Elizabeth's reign to the close of 15 the reign of Charles I, comprises a space of little more than half a century, within which time nearly all that we have of excellence in serious dramatic composition was produced, if we except the *Samson Agonistes* of Milton.

1808.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

Lust's Dominion, or the Lascivious Queen. — Kit Marlowe, 20 as old Izaak Walton assures us, made that *smooth song* which begins “Come live with me and be my love.” The same romantic invitations “in folly ripe in reason rotten,” are given by the queen in the play, and the lover in the ditty. He talks of “beds of roses, buckles of gold :”

25 Thy silver dishes for thy meat,
 As precious as the Gods do eat,
 Shall on an ivory table be
 Prepared each day for thee and me.

¹ The few notes which are interspersed will be found to be chiefly critical.

The lines in the extract have a lascious smoothness in them, and they were the most temperate which I could pick out of this Play. The rest is in King Cambyses' vein ; rape, and murder, and superlatives ; "huffing braggart puft" lines, such as the play-writers anterior to Shakespeare are full of, and Pistol "but coldly imitates." *Blood* is made as light of in some of these old dramas as *money* in a modern sentimental comedy ; and as *this* is given away till it reminds us that it is nothing but counters, so *that* is spilt till it affects us no more than its representative, the paint of the property-man in the 10 theatre.

Tamburlaine the Great, or the Scythian Shepherd.—The lunes of Tamburlaine are perfect midsummer madness. Nebuchadnazar's are mere modest pretensions compared with the thundering vaunts of this Scythian Shepherd. He comes 15 in, drawn by conquered kings, and reproaches these *pampered jades of Asia* that they can *draw but twenty miles a day*. Till I saw this passage with my own eyes, I never believed that it was anything more than a pleasant burlesque of mine ancient's. But I can assure my readers that it is soberly set 20 down in a play, which their ancestors took to be serious.

Edward the Second.—In a very different style from mighty Tamburlaine is the tragedy of Edward the Second. The reluctant pangs of abdicating royalty in Edward furnished hints, which Shakespeare scarcely improved in his Richard 25 the Second ; and the death-scene of Marlowe's king moves pity and terror beyond any scene ancient or modern with which I am acquainted.

The Rich Jew of Malta.—Marlowe's Jew does not approach so near to Shakespeare's, as his Edward the Second 30 does to Richard the Second. Barabas is a mere monster brought in with a large painted nose to please the rabble. He kills in sport, poisons whole nunneries, invents infernal machines. He is just such an exhibition as a century or two

earlier might have been played before the Londoners "by the royal command," when a general pillage and massacre of the Hebrews had been previously resolved on in the cabinet. It is curious to see a superstition wearing out. The idea of a 5 Jew, which our pious ancestors contemplated with so much horror, has nothing in it now revolting. We have tamed the claws of the beast, and pared its nails, and now we take it to our arms, fondle it, write plays to flatter it; it is visited by 10 princes, affects a taste, patronizes the arts, and is the only liberal and gentlemanlike thing in Christendom.

Doctor Faustus. — The growing horrors of Faustus's last scene are awfully marked by the hours and half hours as they expire, and bring him nearer and nearer to the exactment of his dire compact. It is indeed an agony and a fearful 15 collocation. Marlowe is said to have been tainted with atheistical positions, to have denied God and the Trinity. To such a genius the history of Faustus must have been delectable food: to wander in fields where curiosity is forbidden to go, to approach the dark gulf near enough to look in, to be 20 busied in speculations which are the rottenest part of the core of the fruit that fell from the tree of knowledge. Barabas the Jew, and Faustus the conjurer, are offsprings of a mind which at least delighted to dally with interdicted subjects. They both talk a language which a believer would have been tender 25 of putting into the mouth of a character though but in fiction. But the holiest minds have sometimes not thought it reprehensible to counterfeit impiety in the person of another, to bring Vice upon the stage speaking her own dialect; and themselves being armed with an unction of self-confident 30 impunity, have not scrupled to handle and touch that familiarly, which would be death to others. Milton in the person of Satan has started speculations hardier than any which the feeble armoury of the atheist ever furnished; and the precise, strait-laced Richardson has strengthened Vice, from the

mouth of Lovelace, with entangling sophistries and abstruse pleas against her adversary Virtue, which Sedley, Villiers, and Rochester wanted depth of libertinism enough to have invented.

THOMAS DEKKER

Old Fortunatus.—The humour of a frantic lover, in the 5 scene where Orleans to his friend Galloway defends the passion with which himself, being a prisoner in the English king's court, is enamoured to frenzy of the king's daughter Agripyna, is done to the life. Orleans is as passionate an inamorato as any which Shakespeare ever drew. He is just such another 10 adept in Love's reasons. The sober people of the world are with him

A swarm of fools
Crowding together to be counted wise.

He talks “pure Biron and Romeo,” he is almost as poetical 15 as they, quite as philosophical, only a little madder. After all, Love's sectaries are a reason unto themselves. We have gone retrograde to the noble heresy, since the days when Sidney proselyted our nation to this mixed health and disease; the kindliest symptom, yet the most alarming crisis in the ticklish 20 state of youth; the nourisher and the destroyer of hopeful wits; the mother of twin births, wisdom and folly, valour and weakness; the servitude above freedom; the gentle mind's religion; the liberal superstition.

Satiro-Mastix, or the Untrussing of the Humorous Poet.— 25 [The king exacts an oath from Sir Walter Terill to send his bride Cælestina to court on the marriage night. Her father, to save her honour, gives her a poisonous mixture which she swallows.]

The beauty and force of this scene are much diminished to the reader of the entire play, when he comes to find that this

solemn preparation is but a sham contrivance of the father's, and the potion which Cælestina swallows nothing more than a sleeping draught; from the effects of which she is to awake in due time, to the surprise of her husband, and the great mirth and edification of the king and his courtiers. As Hamlet says, they do but "poison in jest." The sentiments are worthy of a real martyrdom, and an Appian sacrifice in earnest.

The Honest Whore.—There is in the second part of this play, where Bellafront, a reclaimed harlot, recounts some of the miseries of her profession, a simple picture of honour and shame, contrasted without violence, and expressed without immodesty, which is worth all the *strong lines* against the harlot's profession, with which both parts of this play are offensively crowded. A satirist is always to be suspected, who, to make vice odious, dwells upon all its acts and minutest circumstances with a sort of relish and retrospective fondness. But so near are the boundaries of panegyric and invective, that a worn-out sinner is sometimes found to make the best declaimer against sin. The same high-seasoned descriptions, which in his unregenerate state served but to inflame his appetites, in his new province of moralist will serve him, a little turned, to expose the enormity of those appetites in other men. When Cervantes with such proficiency of fondness dwells upon the Don's library, who sees not that he has been a great reader of books of knight-errantry—perhaps was at some time of his life in danger of falling into those very extravagancies which he ridiculed so happily in his hero?

JOHN MARSTON

Antonio and Mellida.—The situation of Andrugio and Lucio, in the first part of this tragedy, where Andrugio Duke of Genoa, banished his country, with the loss of a son supposed drowned, is cast upon the territory of his mortal enemy the Duke of Venice, with no attendants but Lucio an old nobleman,

and a page — resembles that of Lear and Kent in that king's distresses. Andrugio, like Lear, manifests a kinglike impatience, a turbulent greatness, an affected resignation. The enemies which he enters lists to combat, "Despair and mighty Grief and sharp Impatience," and the forces which he 5 brings to vanquish them, "cornets of horse," &c., are in the boldest style of allegory. They are such a "race of mourners" as the "infection of sorrows loud" in the intellect might beget on some "pregnant cloud" in the imagination. The prologue to the second part, for its passionate earnestness, and for the 10 tragic note of preparation which it sounds, might have preceded one of those old tales of Thebes or Pelops' line, which Milton has so highly commended, as free from the common error of the poets in his day, of "intermixing comic stuff with tragic sadness and gravity, brought in without discretion cor- 15 ruptly to gratify the people." It is as solemn a preparative as the warning voice which he who saw the Apocalypse heard cry.

What You Will. — *O I shall ne'er forget how he went clothed.*
Act I. Scene I. — To judge of the liberality of these notions of dress, we must advert to the days of Gresham, and the con- 20 sternation which a phenomenon habited like the merchant here described would have excited among the flat round caps and cloth stockings upon 'Change, when those "original arguments or tokens of a citizen's vocation were in fashion, not more for thrift and usefulness than for distinction and grace." The blank 25 uniformity to which all professional distinctions in apparel have been long hastening, is one instance of the decay of symbols among us, which whether it has contributed or not to make us a more intellectual, has certainly made us a less imaginative people. Shakespeare knew the force of signs: a "malignant 30 and a turban'd Turk." This "meal-cap miller," says the author of *God's Revenge against Murder*, to express his indignation at an atrocious outrage committed by the miller Pierot upon the person of the fair Marieta.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

*The Merry Devil of Edmonton.*¹—The scene in this delightful comedy, in which Jerningham, “with the true feeling of a zealous friend,” touches the griefs of Mounchensey, seems written to make the reader happy. Few of our dramatists or novelists have attended enough to this. They torture and wound us abundantly. They are economists only in delight. Nothing can be finer, more gentlemanlike, and nobler, than the conversation and compliments of these young men. How delicious is Raymond Mounchensey’s forgetting, in his fears, that Jerningham has a “Saint in Essex ;” and how sweetly his friend reminds him ! I wish it could be ascertained, that Michael Drayton was the author of this piece. It would add a worthy appendage to the renown of that Panegyrist of my native Earth : who has gone over her soil, in his Polyolbion, with the fidelity of a herald, and the painful love of a son ; who has not left a rivulet, so narrow that it may be stepped over, without honourable mention ; and has animated hills and streams with life and passion beyond the dreams of old mythology.

THOMAS HEYWOOD

The Fair Maid of the Exchange.—The full title of this play is “The Fair Maid of the Exchange, with the Humours of the Cripple of Fenchurch.” The above satire against some Dramatic Plagiarists of the time, is put into the mouth of the Cripple, who is an excellent fellow, and the hero of the Comedy. Of his humour this extract is a sufficient specimen ; but he is described (albeit a tradesman, yet wealthy withal) with heroic qualities of mind and body ; the latter of which he evinces by rescuing his Mistress (the Fair Maid) from three robbers by

¹ It has been ascribed without much proof to Shakespeare and to Michael Drayton.

the main force of one crutch lustily applied ; and the former by his foregoing the advantages which this action gained him in her good opinion, and bestowing his wit and finesse in procuring for her a husband, in the person of his friend Golding, more worthy of her beauty, than he could conceive his own maimed and halting limbs to be. It would require some boldness in a dramatist nowadays to exhibit such a character ; and some luck in finding a sufficient actor, who would be willing to personate the infirmities, together with the virtues, of the noble Cripple. 5

A Woman Killed with Kindness.—Heywood is a sort of *prose* Shakespeare. His scenes are to the full as natural and affecting. But we miss *the poet*, that which in Shakespeare always appears out and above the surface of *the nature*. Heywood's characters in this play, for instance, his country gentlemen, &c., are exactly what we see, but of the best kind of what we see in life. Shakespeare makes us believe, while we are among his lovely creations, that they are nothing but what we are familiar with, as in dreams new things seem old ; but we awake, and sigh for the difference. 10 15 20

I am tempted to extract some lines from Heywood's “*Hierarchie of Angels, 1634* ;” not strictly as a Dramatic Poem, but because the passage contains a string of names, all but that of *Watson*, his contemporary Dramatists. He is complaining in a mood half serious, half comic, of the disrespect which Poets 25 in his own times meet with from the world, compared with the honours paid them by Antiquity. *Then*, they could afford them three or four sonorous names, and at full length ; as to Ovid, the addition of Publius Naso Sulmensis ; to Seneca, that of Lucius Annæas Cordubensis ; and the like. *Now*, says he, 30

Our modern Poets to that pass are driven,
Those names are curtail'd which they first had given ;
And, as we wish'd to have their memories drown'd,
We scarcely can afford them half their sound,

Greene, who had in both Academies ta'en
 Degree of Master, yet could never gain
 To be call'd more than Robin : who, had he
 Profess'd aught save the Muse, served, and been free
 5 After a seven years' 'prenticeship, might have
 (With credit too) gone Robert to his grave.
 Marlowe, renown'd for his rare art and wit,
 Could ne'er attain beyond the name of Kit ;
 Although his Hero and Leander did
 10 Merit addition rather. Famous Kid
 Was call'd but Tom. Tom Watson, though he wrote
 Able to make Apollo's self to dote
 Upon his Muse ; for all that he could strive,
 Yet never could to his full name arrive.
 15 Tom Nash (in his time of no small esteem)
 Could not a second syllable redeem.
 Excellent Beaumont, in the foremost rank
 Of the rarest wits, was never more than Frank.
 Mellifluous Shakespeare, whose enchanting quill
 20 Commanded mirth or passion, was but Will ;
 And famous Jonson, though his learned pen
 Be dipp'd in Castaly, is still but Ben.
 Fletcher, and Webster, of that learned pack
 None of the meanest, neither was but Jack ;
 25 Dekker's but Tom ; nor May, nor Middleton ;
 And he's now but Jack Ford, that once was John.

Possibly our Poet was a little sore, that this contemptuous
 curtailment of their baptismal names was chiefly exercised upon
 his poetical brethren of the *Drama*. We hear nothing about
 30 Sam Daniel or Ned Spenser, in his catalogue. The familiarity
 of common discourse might probably take the greater liberties
 with the Dramatic Poets, as conceiving of them as more upon
 a level with the Stage Actors. Or did their greater publicity,
 and popularity in consequence, fasten these diminutives upon
 35 them out of a feeling of love and kindness, as we say Harry.

the Fifth, rather than Henry, when we would express goodwill? — as himself says, in those reviving words put into his mouth by Shakespeare, where he would comfort and confirm his doubting brothers : —

Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,
But Harry, Harry!

5

And doubtless Heywood had an indistinct conception of this truth, when (coming to his own name), with that beautiful *retracting* which is natural to one that, not satirically given, has wandered a little out of his way into something recriminative, he goes on to say : —

Nor speak I this, that any here exprest
Should think themselves less worthy than the rest
Whose names have their full syllables and sound ;
Or that Frank, Kit, or Jack, are the least wound
Unto their fame and merit. I for my part
(Think others what they please) except that heart,
Which courts my love in most familiar phrase ;
And that it takes not from my pains or praise,
If any one to me so bluntly come :
I hold he loves me best that calls me Tom.

15

20

The foundations of the English Drama were laid deep in *tragedy* by Marlowe, and others — Marlowe especially — while our *comedy* was yet in its lisping state. To this tragic pre-ponderance (forgetting his own sweet Comedies, and Shakespeare's), Heywood seems to refer with regret ; as in the “Roscian Strain” he evidently alludes to Alleyn, who was great in the “Jew of Malta,” as Heywood elsewhere testifies, and in the principal tragic parts both of Marlowe and Shakespeare.

25

The Brazen Age. — I cannot take leave of this Drama without noticing a touch of the truest pathos, which the writer has

30

put into the mouth of Meleager, as he is wasting away by the operation of the fatal brand, administered to him by his wretched Mother.

5 My flame increaseth still—Oh Father Æneus ;
 And you, Althea, whom I would call Mother,
 But that my genius prompts me thou'rt unkind :
 And yet farewell!

What is the boasted “Forgive me, but forgive me !” of the dying wife of Shore in Rowe, compared with these three little
 10 words?

The English Traveller.—Heywood’s preface to this play is interesting, as it shows the heroic indifference about the opinion of posterity, which some of these great writers seem to have felt. There is a magnanimity in authorship as in everything
 15 else. His ambition seems to have been confined to the pleasure of hearing the players speak his lines while he lived. It does not appear that he ever contemplated the possibility of being read by after-ages. What a slender pittance of fame was motive sufficient to the production of such plays as the English
 20 Traveller, the Challenge for Beauty, and the Woman Killed with Kindness ! Posterity is bound to take care that a writer loses nothing by such a noble modesty.

If I were to be consulted as to a Reprint of our Old English Dramatists, I should advise to begin with the collected Plays
 25 of Heywood. He was a fellow Actor, and fellow Dramatist, with Shakespeare. He possessed not the imagination of the latter ; but in all those qualities which gained for Shakespeare the attribute of *gentle*, he was not inferior to him. Generosity, courtesy, temperance in the depths of passion ; sweetness, in a
 30 word, and gentleness ; Christianity ; and true hearty Anglicism of feelings, shaping that Christianity ; shine throughout his beautiful writings in a manner more conspicuous than in those of Shakespeare, but only more conspicuous, inasmuch as in

Heywood these qualities are primary, in the other subordinate to poetry. I love them both equally, but Shakespeare has most of my wonder. Heywood should be known to his countrymen, as he deserves. His plots are almost invariably English. I am sometimes jealous, that Shakespeare laid so few of his scenes at home. I laud Ben Jonson, for that in one instance having framed the first draught of his *Every Man in his Humour* in Italy, he changed the scene, and Anglicised his characters. The names of them in the First Edition, may not be unamusing. 10

Men.

Lorenzo, Sen.
Lorenzo, Jun.
Prospero.
Thorello.
Stephano (Master Stephen).
Dr. Clement (Justice Clement).
Bobadilla (Bobadil).
Musco.
Cob (the same in English).
Peto.
Pizo.
Matheo (Master Mathew).

Women.

Guilliana.
Biancha.
Hesperida.
Tib (the same in English). 15

How say you, Reader? do not Master Kitely, Mistress Kitely, Master Knowell, Brainworm, &c., read better than these Cisalpines? 25

THOMAS MIDDLETON AND WILLIAM ROWLEY

A Fair Quarrel.—The insipid levelling morality to which the modern stage is tied down, would not admit of such admirable passions as these scenes are filled with. A puritanical obtuseness of sentiment, a stupid infantile goodness, is creeping among us, instead of the vigorous passions, and 30

virtues clad in flesh and blood, with which the old dramatists present us. Those noble and liberal casuists could discern in the differences, the quarrels, the animosities of men, a beauty and truth of moral feeling, no less than in the everlastingly 5 inculcated duties of forgiveness and atonement. With us, all is hypocritical meekness. A reconciliation-scene, be the occasion never so absurd, never fails of applause. Our audiences come to the theatre to be complimented on their goodness. They compare notes with the amiable characters in the play, 10 and find a wonderful sympathy of disposition between them. We have a common stock of dramatic morality, out of which a writer may be supplied without the trouble of copying it from originals within his own breast. To know the boundaries of honour, to be judiciously valiant, to have a temperance 15 which shall beget a smoothness in the angry swellings of youth, to esteem life as nothing when the sacred reputation of a parent is to be defended, yet to shake and tremble under a pious cowardice when that ark of an honest confidence is found to be frail and tottering, to feel the true blows of a real 20 disgrace blunting that sword which the imaginary strokes of a supposed false imputation had put so keen an edge upon but lately: to do, or to imagine this done in a feigned story, asks something more of a moral sense, somewhat a greater delicacy of perception in questions of right and wrong, than goes to 25 the writing of two or three hackneyed sentences about the laws of honour as opposed to the laws of the land, or a commonplace against duelling. Yet such things would stand a writer nowadays in far better stead than Captain Ager and his conscientious honour; and he would be considered as a far 30 better teacher of morality than old Rowley or Middleton, if they were living.

WILLIAM ROWLEY

A New Wonder; a Woman Never Vexed. — The old play-writers are distinguished by an honest boldness of exhibition, they show everything without being ashamed. If a reverse in fortune is to be exhibited, they fairly bring us to the prison-gate and the alms-basket. A poor man on our stage is always 5 a gentleman, he may be known by a peculiar neatness of apparel, and by wearing black. Our delicacy in fact forbids the dramatizing of distress at all. It is never shown in its essential properties; it appears but as the adjunct of some virtue, as something which is to be relieved, from the approbation of which relief the spectators are to derive a certain 10 soothing of self-referred satisfaction. We turn away from the real essences of things to hunt after their relative shadows, moral duties; whereas, if the truth of things were fairly represented, the relative duties might be safely trusted to them- 15 selves, and moral philosophy lose the name of a science.

THOMAS MIDDLETON

Women beware Women: A Tragedy. — [Livia, the Duke's creature, cajoles a poor Widow with the appearance of hospitality and neighbourly attentions, that she may get her daughter-in-law (who is left in the Mother's care in the Son's 20 absence) into her trains, to serve the Duke's pleasure.]

This is one of those scenes which has the air of being an immediate transcript from life. Livia the "good neighbour" is as real a creature as one of Chaucer's characters. She is such another jolly Housewife as the Wife of Bath. 25

The Witch. — Though some resemblance may be traced between the charms in Macbeth, and the incantations in this play, which is supposed to have preceded it, this coincidence will not detract much from the originality of Shakespeare.

His witches are distinguished from the witches of Middleton by essential differences. These are creatures to whom man or woman, plotting some dire mischief, might resort for occasional consultation. Those originate deeds of blood, and begin 5 bad impulses to men. From the moment that their eyes first meet with Macbeth's, he is spell-bound. That meeting sways his destiny. He can never break the fascination. These witches can hurt the body, those have power over the soul. Hecate in Middleton has a son, a low buffoon: the hags of 10 Shakespeare have neither child of their own, nor seem to be descended from any parent. They are foul anomalies, of whom we know not whence they are sprung, nor whether they have beginning or ending. As they are without human passions, so they seem to be without human relations. They 15 come with thunder and lightning, and vanish to airy music. This is all we know of them. Except Hecate, they have no names; which heightens their mysteriousness. The names, and some of the properties, which the other author has given to his hags, excite smiles. The Weird Sisters are serious 20 things. Their presence cannot co-exist with mirth. But, in a lesser degree, the witches of Middleton are fine creations. Their power too is, in some measure, over the mind. They raise jars, jealousies, strifes, "like a thick scurf" over life.

WILLIAM ROWLEY — THOMAS DEKKER —
JOHN FORD, &c.

The Witch of Edmonton.—Mother Sawyer, in this wild 25 play, differs from the hags of both Middleton and Shakespeare. She is the plain traditional old woman witch of our ancestors; poor, deformed, and ignorant; the terror of villages, herself amenable to a justice. That should be a hardy sheriff, with the power of the county at his heels, that would lay hands 30 upon the Weird Sisters. They are of another jurisdiction.

But upon the common and received opinion, the author (or authors) have engrafted strong fancy. There is something frightfully earnest in her invocations to the Familiar.

CYRIL TOURNEUR

The Atheist's Tragedy. — *Drowned Soldier.* — This way of description, which seems unwilling ever to leave off, weaving parenthesis within parenthesis, was brought to its height by Sir Philip Sidney. He seems to have set the example to Shakespeare. Many beautiful instances may be found all over the Arcadia. These bountiful Wits always give full measure, pressed down and running over. 5

The Revengers' Tragedy. — The reality and life of the dialogue, in which Vindici and Hippolito first tempt their mother, and then threaten her with death for consenting to the dishonour of their sister, passes any scenical illusion I ever felt. I never read it but my ears tingle, and I feel a hot blush 10 overspread my cheeks, as if I were presently about to proclaim such malefactions of myself as the brothers here rebuke in their unnatural parent, in words more keen and dagger-like than those which Hamlet speaks to his mother. Such power has the passion of shame truly personated, not only to strike guilty 15 creatures unto the soul, but to "appal" even those that are "free." 20

JOHN WEBSTER

The Duchess of Malfy. — All the several parts of the dreadful apparatus with which the death of the Duchess is ushered in, the waxen images which counterfeit death, the wild masque 25 of madmen, the tomb-maker, the bellman, the living person's dirge, the mortification by degrees, — are not more remote from the conceptions of ordinary vengeance, than the strange character of suffering which they seem to bring upon their

victim is out of the imagination of ordinary poets. As they are not like inflictions of this life, so her language seems not of this world. She has lived among horrors till she is become “native and endowed unto that element.” She speaks the 5 dialect of despair; her tongue has a smatch of Tartarus and the souls in bale. To move a horror skilfully, to touch a soul to the quick, to lay upon fear as much as it can bear, to wean and weary a life till it is ready to drop, and then step in with mortal instruments to take its last forfeit: this only a Webster 10 can do. Inferior geniuses may “upon horror’s head horrors accumulate,” but they cannot do this. They mistake quantity for quality; they “terrify babes with painted devils”; but they know not how a soul is to be moved. Their terrors want dignity, their affrightments are without decorum.

15 *The White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona.* — This White Devil of Italy sets off a bad cause so speciously, and pleads with such an innocence-resembling boldness, that we seem to see that matchless beauty of her face which inspires such gay confidence into her, and are ready to expect, when she has done her pleadings, 20 that her very judges, her accusers, the grave ambassadors who sit as spectators, and all the court, will rise and make proffer to defend her in spite of the utmost conviction of her guilt; as the Shepherds in *Don Quixote* make proffer to follow the beautiful Shepherdess *Marcela*, “without making any profit of 25 her manifest resolution made there in their hearing.”

So sweet and lovely does she make the shame
 Which, like a canker in the fragrant rose,
 Does spot the beauty of her budding name!

I never saw anything like the funeral dirge¹ in this play, 30 for the death of *Marcello*, except the ditty which reminds

¹ Webster was parish clerk at St. Andrew’s, Holborn. The anxious recurrence to church-matters; sacrilege; tomb-stones; with the frequent introduction of *dirges*; in this, and his other tragedies, may be traced to his professional sympathies.

Ferdinand of his drowned father in the *Tempest*. As that is of the water, watery; so this is of the earth, earthy. Both have that intenseness of feeling, which seems to resolve itself into the element which it contemplates.

In a note on the Spanish Tragedy, I have said that there 5 is nothing in the undoubted plays of Jonson which would authorize us to suppose that he could have supplied the additions to *Hieronymo*. I suspected the agency of some more potent spirit. I thought that Webster might have furnished them. They seemed full of that wild, solemn, preternatural 10 cast of grief which bewilders us in the *Duchess of Malfy*. On second consideration, I think this a hasty criticism. They are more like the overflowing griefs and talking distraction of *Titus Andronicus*. The sorrows of the *Duchess* set inward; if she talks, it is little more than soliloquy imitating conversation in 15 a kind of bravery.

JOHN FORD

The Lover's Melancholy; Contention of a Bird and a Musician.—This Story, which is originally to be met with in Strada's *Prolusions*, has been paraphrased in rhyme by Cra- 20 shaw, Ambrose Philips, and others: but none of those ver- sions can at all compare for harmony and grace with this blank verse of Ford's. It is as fine as anything in Beaumont and Fletcher; and almost equals the strife which it celebrates.

'Tis Pity She's a Whore: a Tragedy.—The good Friar in this play is evidently a copy of Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*. He is the same kind physician to the souls of his young charges; but he has more desperate patients to deal with.

The Broken Heart.—I do not know where to find, in any play, a catastrophe so grand, so solemn, and so surprising as 30 in this. This is indeed, according to Milton, to describe high passions and high actions. The fortitude of the Spartan boy,

who let a beast gnaw out his bowels till he died without expressing a groan, is a faint bodily image of this dilaceration of the spirit, and exenteration of the inmost mind, which Calantha, with a holy violence against her nature, keeps 5 closely covered, till the last duties of a wife and a queen are fulfilled. Stories of martyrdom are but of chains and the stake ; a little bodily suffering. These torments

10 On the purest spirits prey,
As on entrails, joints, and limbs,
With answerable pains, but more intense.

What a noble thing is the soul in its strengths and in its weaknesses ! Who would be less weak than Calantha ? Who can be so strong ? The expression of this transcendent scene almost bears us in imagination to Calvary and the Cross ; and 15 we seem to perceive some analogy between the scenical sufferings which we are here contemplating, and the real agonies of that final completion to which we dare no more than hint a reference. Ford was of the first order of poets. He sought for sublimity, not by parcels, in metaphors or visible images, 20 but directly where she has her full residence in the heart of man ; in the actions and sufferings of the greatest minds. There is a grandeur of the soul above mountains, seas, and the elements. Even in the poor perverted reason of Giovanni and Annabella, in the play¹ which stands at the head of the 25 modern collection of the works of this author, we discern traces of that fiery particle, which, in the irregular starting from out the road of beaten action, discovers something of a right line even in obliquity, and shows hints of an improvable greatness in the lowest descents and degradations of our 30 nature.

¹ 'Tis Pity She's a Whore.

FULKE GREVILLE, LORD BROOKE

Alakam, Mustapha. — The two tragedies of Lord Brooke, printed among his poems, might with more propriety have been termed political treatises than plays. Their author has strangely contrived to make passion, character, and interest, of the highest order, subservient to the expression of state 5 dogmas and mysteries. He is nine parts Machiavel and Tacitus, for one part Sophocles or Seneca. In this writer's estimate of the powers of the mind, the understanding must have held a most tyrannical pre-eminence. Whether we look into his plays, or his most passionate love-poems, we shall find all 10 frozen and made rigid with intellect. The finest movements of the human heart, the utmost grandeur of which the soul is capable, are essentially comprised in the actions and speeches of Cælica and Camena. Shakespeare, who seems to have had a peculiar delight in contemplating womanly perfection, whom 15 for his many sweet images of female excellence all women are in an especial manner bound to love, has not raised the ideal of the female character higher than Lord Brooke, in these two women, has done. But it requires a study equivalent to the learning of a new language to understand their meaning when 20 they speak. It is indeed hard to hit :

Much like thy riddle, Samson, in one day
Or seven though one should musing sit.

It is as if a being of pure intellect should take upon him to express the emotions of our sensitive natures. There would 25 be all knowledge, but sympathetic expressions would be wanting.

BEN JONSON

The Case is Altered.—The passion for wealth has worn out much of its grossness in tract of time. Our ancestors certainly conceived of money as able to confer a distinct gratification in itself, not considered simply as a symbol of wealth. The 5 old poets, when they introduce a miser, make him address his gold as his mistress ; as something to be seen, felt, and hugged ; as capable of satisfying two of the senses at least. The substitution of a thin, unsatisfying medium in the place of the good old tangible metal, has made avarice quite a 10 Platonic affection in comparison with the seeing, touching, and handling-pleasures of the old Chrysophilites. A bank-note can no more satisfy the touch of a true sensualist in this passion, than Creusa could return her husband's embrace in the shades. See the Cave of Mammon in Spenser ; Barabas's 15 contemplation of his wealth in the Rich Jew of Malta ; Luke's raptures in the City Madam ; the idolatry and absolute gold-worship of the miser Jaques in this early comic production of Ben Jonson's. Above all hear Guzman, in that excellent old translation of the Spanish Rogue, expatiate on the "ruddy 20 cheeks of your golden ruddocks, your Spanish pistolets, your plump and full-faced Portuguese, and your clear-skinned pieces of eight of Castile," which he and his fellows the beggars kept secret to themselves, and did privately enjoy in a plentiful manner. " For to have them, to pay them away, is not to enjoy 25 them ; to enjoy them, is to have them lying by us ; having no other need of them than to use them for the clearing of the eye-sight, and the comforting of our senses. These we did carry about with us, sewing them in some patches of our doublets near unto the heart, and as close to the skin as we could 30 handsomely quilt them in, holding them to be restorative."

Poetaster.—This Roman play seems written to confute those enemies of Ben in his own days and ours, who have said that

he made a pedantic use of his learning. He has here revived the whole Court of Augustus, by a learned spell. We are admitted to the society of the illustrious dead. Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Tibullus, converse in our own tongue more finely and poetically than they were used to express themselves in their native Latin. Nothing can be imagined more elegant, refined, and court-like, than the scenes between this Louis the Fourteenth of antiquity and his literati. The whole essence and secret of that kind of intercourse is contained therein. The economical liberality by which greatness, seeming to waive some part of its prerogative, takes care to lose none of the essentials; the prudential liberties of an inferior, which flatter by commanded boldness and soothe with complimentary sincerity. These, and a thousand beautiful passages from his *New Inn*, his *Cynthia's Revels*, and from those numerous court-masques and entertainments which he was in the daily habit of furnishing, might be adduced to show the poetical fancy and elegance of mind of the supposed rugged old bard.

Alchemist.—The judgment is perfectly overwhelmed by the torrent of images, words, and book-knowledge, with which Epicure Mammon (Act 2, Scene 2) confounds and stuns his incredulous hearer. They come pouring out like the successive falls of Nilus. They “doubly redouble strokes upon the foe.” Description outstrikes proof. We are made to believe effects before we have testimony for their causes. If there is no one image which attains the height of the sublime, yet the confluence and assemblage of them all produces a result equal to the grandest poetry. The huge Xercean army countervails against single Achilles. Epicure Mammon is the most determined offspring of its author. It has the whole “matter and copy of the father—eye, nose, lip, the trick of his frown.” It is just such a swaggerer as contemporaries have described old Ben to be. Meercraft, Bobadil, the Host of the *New Inn*,

have all his image and superscription. But Mammon is arrogant pretension personified. Sir Samson Legend, in Love for Love, is such another lying, overbearing character, but he does not come up to Epicure Mammon. What a “towering 5 bravery” there is in his sensuality! he affects no pleasure under a Sultan. It is as if “Egypt with Assyria strove in luxury.”

GEORGE CHAPMAN

Bussy D'Ambois, *Byron's Conspiracy*, *Byron's Tragedy*, &c., &c.—Webster has happily characterized the “full and 10 heightened style” of Chapman, who, of all the English play-writers, perhaps approaches nearest to Shakespeare in the descriptive and didactic, in passages which are less purely dramatic. Dramatic imitation was not his talent. He could not go out of himself, as Shakespeare could shift at pleasure, to 15 inform and animate other existences, but in himself he had an eye to perceive and a soul to embrace all forms and modes of being. He would have made a great epic poet, if indeed he has not abundantly shown himself to be one; for his Homer is not so properly a translation as the stories of Achilles and 20 Ulysses re-written. The earnestness and passion which he has put into every part of these poems, would be incredible to a reader of mere modern translations. His almost Greek 25 zeal for the glory of his heroes can only be paralleled by that fierce spirit of Hebrew bigotry, with which Milton, as if personating one of the zealots of the old law, clothed himself when he sat down to paint the acts of Samson against the uncircumcised. The great obstacle to Chapman's translations being read, is their unconquerable quaintness. He pours out in the same breath the most just and natural, and the most 30 violent and crude expressions. He seems to grasp at whatever words come first to hand while the enthusiasm is upon him, as if all other must be inadequate to the divine meaning.

But passion (the all in all in poetry) is everywhere present, raising the low, dignifying the mean, and putting sense into the absurd. He makes his readers glow, weep, tremble, take any affection which he pleases, be moved by words, or in spite of them, be disgusted and overcome their disgust. 5

I have often thought that the vulgar misconception of Shakespeare, as of a wild irregular genius "in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties," would be really true, applied to Chapman. But there is no scale by which to balance such disproportionate subjects as the faults and 10 beauties of a great genius. To set off the former with any fairness against the latter, the pain which they give us should be in some proportion to the pleasure which we receive from the other. As these transport us to the highest heaven, those should steep us in agonies infernal. 15

Bussy D'Ambois. — This calling upon Light and Darkness for information, but, above all, the description of the Spirit — "Threw his changed countenance headlong into clouds" — is tremendous, to the curdling of the blood. I know nothing in Poetry like it. 20

FRANCIS BEAUMONT—JOHN FLETCHER

Maid's Tragedy. — One characteristic of the excellent old poets is, their being able to bestow grace upon subjects which naturally do not seem susceptible of any. I will mention two instances. Zelmane in the *Arcadia* of Sidney, and Helena in the *All's Well that Ends Well* of Shakespeare. What can 25 be more unpromising at first sight, than the idea of a young man disguising himself in woman's attire, and passing himself off for a woman among women; and that for a long space of time? Yet Sir Philip has preserved so matchless a decorum, that neither does Pyrocles' manhood suffer any stain for the 30 effeminacy of Zelmane, nor is the respect due to the princesses

at all diminished when the deception comes to be known. In the sweetly constituted mind of Sir Philip Sidney, it seems as if no ugly thought or unhandsome meditation could find a harbour. He turned all that he touched into images of honour and virtue. Helena in Shakespeare is a young woman seeking a man in marriage. The ordinary rules of courtship are reversed, the habitual feelings are crossed. Yet with such exquisite address this dangerous subject is handled, that Helena's forwardness loses her no honour; delicacy dispenses with its laws in her favour, and nature, in her single case, seems content to suffer a sweet violation. Aspatia, in the Maid's Tragedy, is a character equally difficult, with Helena, of being managed with grace. She too is a slighted woman, refused by the man who had once engaged to marry her. Yet it is artfully contrived, that while we pity we respect her, and she descends without degradation. Such wonders true poetry and passion can do, to confer dignity upon subjects which do not seem capable of it. But Aspatia must not be compared at all points with Helena; she does not so absolutely predominate over her situation but she suffers some diminution, some abatement of the full lustre of the female character, which Helena never does. Her character has many degrees of sweetness, some of delicacy; but it has weakness, which, if we do not despise, we are sorry for. After all, Beaumont and Fletcher were but an inferior sort of Shakespeares and Sidneys.

Philaster.—The character of Bellario must have been extremely popular in its day. For many years after the date of Philaster's first exhibition on the stage, scarce a play can be found without one of these women pages in it, following in the train of some pre-engaged lover, calling on the gods to bless her happy rival (his mistress), whom no doubt she secretly curses in her heart, giving rise to many pretty *equivoques* by the way on the confusion of sex, and either made happy at last by some surprising turn of fate, or dismissed with the

joint pity of the lovers and the audience. Donne has a copy of verses to his mistress, dissuading her from a resolution which she seems to have taken up from some of these scenical representations, of following him abroad as a page. It is so earnest, so weighty, so rich in poetry, in sense, in wit, and 5 pathos, that it deserves to be read as a solemn close in future to all such sickly fancies as he there deprecates.

JOHN FLETCHER

Thierry and Theodoret. — The scene where Ordella offers her life a sacrifice, that the King of France may not be childless, I have always considered as the finest in all Fletcher, and 10 Ordella to be the most perfect notion of the female heroic character, next to Calantha in the *Broken Heart*. She is a piece of sainted nature. Yet noble as the whole passage is, it must be confessed that the manner of it, compared with Shakespeare's finest scenes, is faint and languid. Its motion 15 is circular, not progressive. Each line revolves on itself in a sort of separate orbit. They do not join into one another like a running-hand. Fletcher's ideas moved slow; his versification, though sweet, is tedious, it stops at every turn; he lays line upon line, making up one after the other, adding 20 image to image so deliberately, that we see their junctures. Shakespeare mingles everything, runs line into line, embarrasses sentences and metaphors; before one idea has burst its shell, another is hatched and clamorous for disclosure. Another striking difference between Fletcher and Shakespeare, 25 is the fondness of the former for unnatural and violent situations. He seems to have thought that nothing great could be produced in an ordinary way. The chief incidents in some of his most admired tragedies show this.¹ Shakespeare had nothing of this contortion in his mind, none of that craving 30

¹ *Wife for a Month*, *Cupid's Revenge*, *Double Marriage*, &c.

after violent situations, and flights of strained and improbable virtue, which I think always betrays an imperfect moral sensibility. The wit of Fletcher is excellent¹ like his serious scenes, but there is something strained and far-fetched in both. He is too 5 mistrustful of Nature, he always goes a little on one side of her. Shakespeare chose her without a reserve : and had riches, power, understanding, and length of days, with her, for a dowry.

Love's Pilgrimage.—The dialogue between Philippo and Leocadia is one of the most pleasing if not the most shining 10 scenes in Fletcher. All is sweet, natural, and unforced. It is a copy which we may suppose Massinger to have profited by the studying.

The Two Noble Kinsmen.—The scene in which Palamon and Arcite repining at their hard condition, in being made 15 captives for life in Athens, derive consolation from the enjoyment of each other's company in prison, bears indubitable marks of Fletcher: the two which precede it give strong countenance to the tradition that Shakespeare had a hand in this play. The same judgment may be formed of the death of 20 Arcite and some other passages, not here given. They have a luxuriance in them which strongly resembles Shakespeare's manner in those parts of his plays where, the progress of the interest being subordinate, the poet was at leisure for description. I might fetch instances from *Troilus and Timon*. That 25 Fletcher should have copied Shakespeare's manner through so many entire scenes (which is the theory of Mr. Steevens) is not very probable; that he could have done it with such facility is to me not certain. If Fletcher wrote some scenes in imitation, why did he stop? or shall we say that Shakespeare 30 wrote the other scenes in imitation of Fletcher? that he gave Shakespeare a curb and a bridle, and that Shakespeare gave him a pair of spurs: as Blackmore and Lucan are brought in exchanging gifts in the *Battle of the Books*?

¹ Wit without Money, and his comedies generally.

Faithful Shepherdess. — If all the parts of this delightful pastoral had been in unison with its many innocent scenes and sweet lyric intermixtures, it had been a poem fit to vie with Comus or the Arcadia, to have been put into the hands of boys and virgins, to have made matter for young dreams, 5 like the loves of Hermia and Lysander. But a spot is on the face of this Diana. Nothing short of infatuation could have driven Fletcher upon mixing with this “blessedness” such an ugly deformity as Cloe, the wanton shepherdess ! Coarse words do but wound the ears ; but a character of lewdness affronts the 10 mind. Female lewdness at once shocks nature and morality. If Cloe was meant to set off Clorin by contrast, Fletcher should have known that such weeds by juxtaposition do not set off but kill sweet flowers.

FRANCIS BEAUMONT

The Triumph of Love: Being the second of four plays, or 15 moral representations, in one. — Violanta, Daughter to a Nobleman of Milan, is with child by Gerrard, supposed to be of mean descent : an offence which by the laws of Milan is made capital to both parties.

Violanta's prattle is so very pretty and so natural *in her 20 situation*, that I could not resist giving it a place. Juno Lucina was never invoked with more elegance. Pope has been praised for giving dignity to a game of cards. It required at least as much address to ennable a lying-in.

PHILIP MASSINGER — THOMAS DEKKER

The Virgin Martyr. — This play has some beauties of so 25 very high an order, that with all my respect for Massinger, I do not think he had poetical enthusiasm capable of rising up to them. His associate Dekker, who wrote Old Fortunatus,

had poetry enough for anything. The very impurities which obtrude themselves among the sweet pieties of this play, like Satan among the Sons of Heaven, have a strength of contrast, a raciness, and a glow in them, which are beyond Massinger.
 5 They are to the religion of the rest what Caliban is to Miranda.

PHILIP MASSINGER

The City Madam.—This bitter satire against the city women for aping the fashions of the court ladies must have been peculiarly gratifying to the females of the Herbert family and the rest of Massinger's noble patrons and patronesses.

10 *The Picture.*—The good sense, rational fondness, and chastised feeling, of the dialogue in which Matthias, a knight of Bohemia, going to the wars, in parting with his wife, shows her substantial reasons why he should go—make it more valuable than many of those scenes in which this writer has
 15 attempted a deeper passion and more tragical interest. Massinger had not the higher requisites of his art in anything like the degree in which they were possessed by Ford, Webster, Tourneur, Heywood, and others. He never shakes or disturbs the mind with grief. He is read with composure and placid
 20 delight. He wrote with that equability of all the passions, which made his English style the purest and most free from violent metaphors and harsh constructions, of any of the dramatists who were his contemporaries.

PHILIP MASSINGER — THOMAS MIDDLETON —
WILLIAM ROWLEY

Old Law.—There is an exquisiteness of moral sensibility,
 25 making one's eyes to gush out tears of delight, and a poetical strangeness in the circumstances of this sweet tragi-comedy, which are unlike anything in the dramas which Massinger

wrote alone. The pathos is of a subtler edge. Middleton and Rowley, who assisted in it, had both of them finer geniuses than their associate.

JAMES SHIRLEY

Claims a place amongst the worthies of this period, not so much for any transcendent talent in himself, as that he was 5 the last of a great race, all of whom spoke nearly the same language, and had a set of moral feelings and notions in common. A new language, and quite a new turn of tragic and comic interest, came in with the Restoration.

The Lady of Pleasure. — The dialogue between Sir Thomas 10 Bornewell and his lady Aretina is in the very spirit of the recriminating scenes between Lord and Lady Townley in the Provoked Husband. It is difficult to believe but it must have been Vanbrugh's prototype.

XXXVI. ON THE GENIUS AND CHARACTER OF HOGARTH

WITH SOME REMARKS ON A PASSAGE IN THE WRITINGS OF
THE LATE MR. BARRY

ONE of the earliest and noblest enjoyments I had when a boy 15 was in the contemplation of those capital prints by Hogarth, the *Harlot's* and *Rake's Progresses*, which, along with some others, hung upon the walls of a great hall in an old-fashioned house in —shire, and seemed the solitary tenants (with myself) of that antiquated and life-deserted apartment. 20

Recollection of the manner in which those prints used to affect me, has often made me wonder, when I have heard Hogarth described as a mere comic painter, as one whose chief

ambition was to *raise a laugh*. To deny that there are throughout the prints which I have mentioned circumstances introduced of a laughable tendency, would be to run counter to the common notions of mankind ; but to suppose that in their *ruling 5 character* they appeal chiefly to the risible faculty, and not first and foremost to the very heart of man, its best and most serious feelings, would be to mistake no less grossly their aim and purpose. A set of severer Satires (for they are not so much Comedies, which they have been likened to, as they are strong and *10 masculine Satires*) less mingled with anything of mere fun, were never written upon paper, or graven upon copper. They resemble Juvenal, or the satiric touches in *Timon of Athens*.

I was pleased with the reply of a gentleman, who being asked which book he esteemed most in his library, answered, *15* — “Shakespeare :” being asked which he esteemed next best, replied, — “Hogarth.” His graphic representations are indeed books : they have the teeming, fruitful, suggestive meaning of *words*. Other pictures we look at, — his prints we read.

In pursuance of this parallel, I have sometimes entertained *20* myself with comparing the *Timon of Athens* of Shakespeare (which I have just mentioned) and Hogarth’s *Rake’s Progress* together. The story, the moral, in both is nearly the same. The wild course of riot and extravagance, ending in the one *25* with driving the Prodigal from the society of men into the solitude of the deserts, and in the other with conducting the Rake through his several stages of dissipation into the still more complete desolations of the mad-house, in the play and in the picture are described with almost equal force and nature. The levée of the Rake, which forms the subject of the second *30* plate in the series, is almost a transcript of Timon’s levée in the opening scene of that play. We find a dedicating poet, and other similar characters, in both.

The concluding scene in the *Rake’s Progress* is perhaps superior to the last scenes of *Timon*. If we seek for something

of kindred excellence in poetry, it must be in the scenes of Lear's beginning madness, where the King and the Fool and the Tom-o'-Bedlam conspire to produce such a medley of mirth checked by misery, and misery rebuked by mirth; where the society of those "strange bed-fellows" which misfortunes have 5 brought Lear acquainted with, so finely sets forth the destitute state of the monarch, while the lunatic bans of the one, and the disjointed sayings and wild but pregnant allusions of the other, so wonderfully sympathize with that confusion, which they seem to assist in the production of, in the senses of that 10 "child-changed father."

In the scene in Bedlam, which terminates the *Rake's Progress*, we find the same assortment of the ludicrous with the terrible. Here is desperate madness, the overturning of originally strong thinking faculties, at which we shudder, as we 15 contemplate the duration and pressure of affliction which it must have asked to destroy such a building; — and here is the gradual hurtless lapse into idiocy, of faculties which at their best of times never having been strong, we look upon the consummation of their decay with no more of pity than is consistent with a smile. The mad tailor, the poor driveller, that has gone out of his wits (and truly he appears to have had no great journey to go to get past their confines) for the love of *Charming Betty Careless*, — these half-laughable, scarce-pitiable objects take off from the horror which the principal figure would of 25 itself raise, at the same time that they assist the feeling of the scene by contributing to the general notion of its subject.

Is it carrying the spirit of comparison to excess to remark, that in the poor kneeling weeping female, who accompanies her seducer in his sad decay, there is something analogous to 30 Kent or Caius, as he delights rather to be called, in *Lear*, — the noblest pattern of virtue which even Shakespeare has conceived, — who follows his royal master in banishment that had pronounced *his* banishment, and forgetful at once of his wrongs

and dignities, taking on himself the disguise of a menial, retains his fidelity to the figure, his loyalty to the carcass, the shadow, the shell and empty husk of Lear?

In the perusal of a book, or of a picture, much of the impression which we receive depends upon the habit of mind which we bring with us to such perusal. The same circumstance may make one person laugh, which shall render another very serious; or in the same person the first impression may be corrected by after-thought. The misemployed incongruous characters of the *Harlot's Funeral*, on a superficial inspection, provoke to laughter; but when we have sacrificed the first emotion to levity, a very different frame of mind succeeds, or the painter has lost half his purpose. I never look at that wonderful assemblage of depraved beings, who, without a grain of reverence or pity in their perverted minds, are performing the sacred exteriors of duty to the relics of their departed partner in folly, but I am as much moved to sympathy from the very want of it in them, as I should be by the finest representation of a virtuous death-bed surrounded by real mourners, pious children, weeping friends,— perhaps more by the very contrast. What reflections does it not awake, of the dreadful heartless state in which the creature (a female, too) must have lived, who in death wants the accompaniment of one genuine tear. That wretch who is removing the lid of the coffin to gaze upon the corpse with a face which indicates a perfect negation of all goodness or womanhood—the hypocrite person and his demure partner—all the fiendish group—to a thoughtful mind present a moral emblem more affecting than if the poor friendless carcass had been depicted as thrown out to the woods, where wolves had assisted at its obsequies, itself furnishing forth its own funeral banquet.

It is easy to laugh at such incongruities as are met together in this picture,— incongruous objects being of the very essence of laughter,— but surely the laugh is far different in its kind

from that thoughtless species to which we are moved by mere farce and grotesque. We laugh when Ferdinand Count Fathom, at the first sight of the white cliffs of Britain, feels his heart yearn with filial fondness towards the land of his progenitors, which he is coming to fleece and plunder,— we smile at the 5 exquisite irony of the passage,— but if we are not led on by such passages to some more salutary feeling than laughter, we are very negligent perusers of them in book or picture.

It is the fashion with those who cry up the great Historical School in this country, at the head of which Sir Joshua Reynolds is placed, to exclude Hogarth from that school, as an artist of an inferior and vulgar class. Those persons seem to me to confound the painting of subjects in common or vulgar life with the being a vulgar artist. The quantity of thought which Hogarth crowds into every picture, would alone *unvulgarize* 15 every subject which he might choose. Let us take the lowest of his subjects, the print called *Gin Lane*. Here is plenty of poverty and low stuff to disgust upon a superficial view; and accordingly, a cold spectator feels himself immediately disgusted and repelled. I have seen many turn away 20 from it, not being able to bear it. The same persons would perhaps have looked with great complacency upon Poussin's celebrated picture of the *Plague at Athens*.¹ Disease and Death and bewildering Terror, in *Athenian garments* are endurable, and come, as the delicate critics express it, within 25 the "limits of pleasurable sensation." But the scenes of their own St. Giles's, delineated by their own countryman, are too shocking to think of. Yet if we could abstract our minds from the fascinating colours of the picture, and forget the coarse execution (in some respects) of the print, intended as it was to 30 be a cheap plate, accessible to the poorer sort of people, for whose instruction it was done, I think we could have no hesitation in conferring the palm of superior genius upon Hogarth,

¹ At the late Mr. Hope's, in Cavendish Square.

comparing this work of his with Poussin's picture. There is more of imagination in it — that power which draws all things to one, — which makes things animate and inanimate, beings with their attributes, subjects and their accessories, take one 5 colour, and serve to one effect. Everything in the print, to use a vulgar expression, *tells*. Every part is full of "strange images of death." It is perfectly amazing and astounding to look at. Not only the two prominent figures, the woman and the half-dead man, which are as terrible as anything which 10 Michael Angelo ever drew, but everything else in the print contributes to bewilder and stupefy, — the very houses, as I heard a friend of mine express it, tumbling all about in various directions, seem drunk — seem absolutely reeling from the effect of that diabolical spirit of frenzy which goes forth over the whole 15 composition. — To show the poetical and almost prophetical conception in the artist, one little circumstance may serve. Not content with the dying and dead figures, which he has strewed in profusion over the proper scene of the action, he shows you what (of a kindred nature) is passing beyond it. 20 Close by the shell, in which, by direction of the parish beadle, a man is depositing his wife, is an old wall, which, partaking of the universal decay around it, is tumbling to pieces. Through a gap in this wall are seen three figures, which appear to make a part in some funeral procession which is passing by on the 25 other side of the wall, out of the sphere of the composition. This extending of the interest beyond the bounds of the subject could only have been conceived by a great genius. Shakespeare, in his description of the painting of the Trojan War, in his *Tarquin and Lucrece*, has introduced a similar device, 30 where the painter made a part stand for the whole : —

For much imaginary work was there,
Conceit deceitful, so compact, so kind,
That for Achilles' image stood his spear,
Griped in an armed hand ; himself behind

Was left unseen, save to the eye of mind :
 A hand, a foot, a face, a leg, a head,
 Stood for the whole to be imagined.

This he well calls *imaginary work*, where the spectator must meet the artist in his conceptions half way ; and it is peculiar 5 to the confidence of high genius alone to trust so much to spectators or readers. Lesser artists show everything distinct and full, as they require an object to be made out to themselves before they can comprehend it.

When I think of the power displayed in this (I will not 10 hesitate to say) sublime print, it seems to me the extreme narrowness of system alone, and of that rage for classification, by which in matters of taste at least, we are perpetually perplexing instead of arranging our ideas, that would make us concede to the work of Poussin above-mentioned, and deny 15 to this of Hogarth, the name of a grand serious composition.

We are for ever deceiving ourselves with names and theories. We call one man a great historical painter, because he has taken for his subjects kings or great men, or transactions over which time has thrown a grandeur. We term another the 20 painter of common life, and set him down in our minds for an artist of an inferior class, without reflecting whether the quantity of thought shown by the latter may not much more than level the distinction which their mere choice of subjects may seem to place between them ; or whether, in fact, from that very com- 25 mon life a great artist may not extract as deep an interest as another man from that which we are pleased to call history.

I entertain the highest respect for the talents and virtues of Reynolds, but I do not like that his reputation should overshadow and stifle the merits of such a man as Hogarth, nor 30 that to mere names and classifications we should be content to sacrifice one of the greatest ornaments of England.

I would ask the most enthusiastic admirer of Reynolds, whether in the countenances of his *Staring* and *Grinning*

Despair, which he has given us for the faces of Ugolino and dying Beaufort, there be anything comparable to the expression which Hogarth has put into the face of his broken-down rake in the last plate but one of the *Rake's Progress*,¹ where a 5 letter from the manager is brought to him to say that his play "will not do"? Here all is easy, natural, undistorted, but withal what a mass of woe is here accumulated! — the long history of a mis-spent life is compressed into the countenance as plainly as the series of plates before had told it; here is no 10 attempt at Gorgonian looks which are to freeze the beholder, no grinning at the antique bed-posts, no face-making, or consciousness of the presence of spectators in or out of the picture, but grief kept to a man's self, a face retiring from notice with the shame which great anguish sometimes brings with it, — a 15 final leave taken of hope, — the coming on of vacancy and stupefaction, — a beginning alienation of mind looking like tranquillity. Here is matter for the mind of the beholder to feed on for the hour together, — matter to feed and fertilize the mind. It is too real to admit one thought about the power 20 of the artist who did it. — When we compare the expression in subjects which so fairly admit of comparison, and find the superiority so clearly to remain with Hogarth, shall the mere contemptible difference of the scene of it being laid in the one case in our Fleet or King's Bench Prison, and in the other in 25 the State Prison of Pisa, or the bedroom of a cardinal, — or that the subject of the one has never been authenticated, and the other is matter of history, — so weigh down the real points of the comparison, as to induce us to rank the artist who has chosen the one scene or subject (though confessedly inferior 30 in that which constitutes the soul of his art) in a class from

¹ The first perhaps in all Hogarth for serious expression. That which comes next to it, I think, is the jaded morning countenance of the debauchee in the second plate of the *Marriage à-la-mode*, which lectures on the vanity of pleasure as audibly as anything in Ecclesiastes.

which we exclude the better genius (who has happened to make choice of the other) with something like disgrace?¹

The Boys under Demoniacal Possession of Raphael and Dominichino, by what law of classification are we bound to assign them to belong to the great style in painting, and to degrade into an inferior class the Rake of Hogarth when he is the Madman in the Bedlam scene? I am sure he is far more impressive than either. It is a face which no one that has seen can easily forget. There is the stretch of human suffering to the utmost endurance, severe bodily pain brought on by strong mental agony, the frightful obstinate laugh of madness,— yet all so unforced and natural, that those who never were witness to madness in real life, think they see nothing but what is familiar to them in this face. Here are no tricks of distortion, nothing but the natural face of agony. This is high tragic painting, and we might as well deny to Shakespeare the honours of a great tragedian, because he has

¹ Sir Joshua Reynolds, somewhere in his lectures, speaks of the *presumption* of Hogarth in attempting the grand style in painting, by which he means his choice of certain Scripture subjects. Hogarth's excursions into Holy Land were not very numerous, but what he has left us in this kind have at least this merit, that they have expression of *some sort or other* in them,— the *Child Moses before Pharaoh's Daughter*, for instance: which is more than can be said of Sir Joshua Reynolds's *Repose in Egypt*, painted for Macklin's Bible, where for a Madonna he has substituted a sleepy, insensible, unmotherly girl, one so little worthy to have been selected as the Mother of the Saviour, that she seems to have neither heart nor feeling to entitle her to become a mother at all. But indeed the race of Virgin Mary painters seems to have been cut up, root and branch, at the Reformation. Our artists are too good Protestants to give life to that admirable commixture of maternal tenderness, with reverential awe and wonder approaching to worship, with which the Virgin Mothers of L. da Vinci and Raphael (themselves by their divine countenances inviting men to worship) contemplate the union of the two natures in the person of their Heaven-born Infant.

interwoven scenes of mirth with the serious business of his plays, as refuse to Hogarth the same praise for the two concluding scenes of the *Rake's Progress*, because of the Comic Lunatics which he has thrown into the one, or the Alchymist 5 that he has introduced in the other, who is paddling in the coals of his furnace, keeping alive the flames of vain hope within the very walls of the prison to which the vanity has conducted him, which have taught the darker lesson of extinguished hope to the desponding figure who is the principal 10 person of the scene.

It is the force of these kindly admixtures which assimilates the scenes of Hogarth and of Shakespeare to the drama of real life, where no such thing as pure tragedy is to be found; but merriment and infelicity, ponderous crime and feather- 15 light vanity, like twi-formed births, disagreeing complexions of one intertexture, perpetually unite to show forth motley spectacles to the world. Then it is that the poet or painter shows his art, when in the selection of these comic adjuncts he chooses such circumstances as shall relieve, contrast with, 20 or fall into, without forming a violent opposition to, his principal object. Who sees not that the Grave-digger in *Hamlet*, the Fool in *Lear*, have a kind of correspondency to, and fall in with, the subjects which they seem to interrupt, while the comic stuff in *Venice Preserved*, and the doggerel nonsense of 25 the Cook and his poisoning associates in the *Rollo* of Beaumont and Fletcher, are pure, irrelevant, impertinent discords, —as bad as the quarrelling dog and cat under the table of the *Lord and the Disciples at Emmaus* of Titian?

Not to tire the reader with perpetual reference to prints 30 which he may not be fortunate enough to possess, it may be sufficient to remark, that the same tragic cast of expression and incident, blended in some instances with a greater alloy of comedy, characterizes his other great work, the *Marriage à-la-mode*, as well as those less elaborate exertions of his genius,

the prints called *Industry* and *Idleness*, the *Distressed Poet*, &c., forming, with the *Harlot's* and *Rake's Progresses*, the most considerable if not the largest class of his productions,— enough surely to rescue Hogarth from the imputation of being a mere buffoon, or one whose general aim was only to *shake the sides*. 5

There remains a very numerous class of his performances, the object of which must be confessed to be principally comic. But in all of them will be found something to distinguish them from the droll productions of Bunbury and others. They have this difference, that we do not merely laugh at, we are led 10 into long trains of reflection by them. In this respect they resemble the characters of Chaucer's *Pilgrims*, which have strokes of humour in them enough to designate them for the most part as comic, but our strongest feeling still is wonder at the comprehensiveness of genius which could crowd, as poet 15 and painter have done, into one small canvas so many diverse yet co-operating materials.

The faces of Hogarth have not a mere momentary interest, as in caricatures, or those grotesque physiognomies which we sometimes catch a glance of in the street, and, struck with 20 their whimsicality, wish for a pencil and the power to sketch them down ; and forget them again as rapidly,— but they are permanent abiding ideas. Not the sports of nature, but her necessary eternal classes. We feel that we cannot part with any of them, lest a link should be broken. 25

It is worthy of observation, that he has seldom drawn a mean or insignificant countenance.¹ Hogarth's mind was

¹ If there are any of that description, they are in his *Strolling Players*, a print which has been cried up by Lord Orford as the richest of his productions, and it may be, for what I know, in the mere lumber, the properties, and dead furniture of the scene, but in living character and expression it is (for Hogarth) lamentably poor and wanting ; it is perhaps the only one of his performances at which we have a right to feel disgusted.

eminently reflective; and, as it has been well observed of Shakespeare, that he has transfused his own poetical character into the persons of his drama (they are all more or less *poets*), Hogarth has impressed a *thinking character* upon the 5 persons of his canvas. This remark must not be taken universally. The exquisite idiotism of the little gentleman in the bag and sword beating his drum in the print of the *Enraged Musician*, would of itself rise up against so sweeping an assertion. But I think it will be found to be true of the generality 10 of his countenances. The knife-grinder and Jew flute-player in the plate just mentioned may serve as instances instead of a thousand. They have intense thinking faces, though the purpose to which they are subservient by no means required it; but indeed it seems as if it was painful to Hogarth to 15 contemplate mere vacancy or insignificance.

This reflection of the artist's own intellect from the faces of his characters, is one reason why the works of Hogarth, so much more than those of any other artist, are objects of meditation. Our intellectual natures love the mirror which gives 20 them back their own likenesses. The mental eye will not bend long with delight upon vacancy.

Another line of eternal separation between Hogarth and the common painters of droll or burlesque subjects, with whom he is often confounded, is the sense of beauty, which 25 in the most unpromising subjects seems never wholly to have deserted him. "Hogarth himself," says Mr. Coleridge,¹ from whom I have borrowed this observation, speaking of a scene which took place at Ratzeburg, "never drew a more ludicrous distortion, both of attitude and physiognomy, than this effect 30 occasioned: nor was there wanting beside it one of those beautiful female faces which the same Hogarth, in whom the satirist never extinguished that love of beauty which belonged to him as a poet, so often and so gladly introduces as the

¹ *The Friend*, No. XVI.

central figure in a crowd of humorous deformities, which figure (such is the power of true genius) neither acts nor is meant to act as a contrast; but diffuses through all, and over each of the group, a spirit of reconciliation and human kindness; and even when the attention is no longer consciously directed to the cause of this feeling, still blends its tenderness with our laughter: and thus prevents the instinctive merriment at the whims of nature, or the foibles or humours of our fellow-men, from degenerating into the heart-poison of contempt or hatred." To the beautiful females in Hogarth, 10 which Mr. C. has pointed out, might be added, the frequent introduction of children (which Hogarth seems to have taken a particular delight in) into his pieces. They have a singular effect in giving tranquillity and a portion of their own innocence to the subject. The baby riding in its mother's lap 15 in the *March to Finchley* (its careless innocent face placed directly behind the intriguing time-furrowed countenance of the treason-plotting French priest), perfectly sobers the whole of that tumultuous scene. The boy mourner winding up his top with so much unpretended insensibility in the plate of the 20 *Harlot's Funeral* (the only thing in that assembly that is not a hypocrite), quiets and soothes the mind that has been disturbed at the sight of so much depraved man and woman kind.

I had written thus far, when I met with a passage in the 25 writings of the late Mr. Barry, which, as it falls in with the *vulgar notion* respecting Hogarth, which this Essay has been employed in combating, I shall take the liberty to transcribe, with such remarks as may suggest themselves to me in the transcription; referring the reader for a full answer to that 30 which has gone before.

"Notwithstanding Hogarth's merit does undoubtedly entitle him to an honourable place among the artists, and that his little compositions, considered as so many dramatic representations,

abounding with humour, character, and extensive observations on the various incidents of low, faulty, and vicious life, are very ingeniously brought together, and frequently tell their own story with more facility than is often found in many of the elevated and more noble inventions of Rafaelle, and other great men; yet it must be honestly confessed, that in what is called knowledge of the figure, foreigners have justly observed, that Hogarth is often so raw and unformed, as hardly to deserve the name of an artist. But this capital defect is not often perceptible, as examples of the naked and of elevated nature but rarely occur in his subjects, which are for the most part filled with characters, that in their nature tend to deformity; besides, his figures are small, and the junctures, and other difficulties of drawing that might occur in their limbs, are artfully concealed with their clothes, rags, &c. But what would atone for all his defects, even if they were twice told, is his admirable fund of invention, ever inexhaustible in its resources; and his satire, which is always sharp and pertinent, and often highly moral, was (except in a few instances, where he weakly and meanly suffered his integrity to give way to his envy) seldom or never employed in a dishonest or unmanly way. Hogarth has been often imitated in his satirical vein, sometimes in his humorous; but very few have attempted to rival him in his moral walk. The line of art pursued by my very ingenious predecessor and brother academician, Mr. Penny, is quite distinct from that of Hogarth, and is of a much more delicate and superior relish; he attempts the heart, and reaches it, whilst Hogarth's general aim is only to shake the sides; in other respects no comparison can be thought of, as Mr. Penny has all that knowledge of the figure and academical skill, which the other wanted. As to Mr. Bunbury, who had so happily succeeded in the vein of humour and caricature, he has for some time past altogether relinquished it, for the more amiable pursuit of

beautiful nature : this, indeed, is not to be wondered at, when we recollect that he has, in Mrs. Bunbury, so admirable an exemplar of the most finished grace and beauty continually at his elbow. But (to say all that occurs to me on this subject) perhaps it may be reasonably doubted, whether the being much conversant with Hogarth's method of exposing meanness, deformity, and vice, in many of his works, is not rather a dangerous, or, at least, a worthless pursuit ; which, if it does not find a false relish and a love of and search after satire and buffoonery in the spectator, is, at least, not unlikely to give 10 him one. Life is short ; and the little leisure of it is much better laid out upon that species of art which is employed about the amiable and the admirable, as it is more likely to be attended with better and nobler consequences to ourselves. These two pursuits in art may be compared with two sets of 15 people with whom we might associate ; if we give ourselves up to the Footes, the Kenricks, &c., we shall be continually busied and paddling in whatever is ridiculous, faulty, and vicious in life ; whereas there are those to be found with whom we should be in the constant pursuit and study of all 20 that gives a value and a dignity to human nature." [Account of a series of pictures in the Great Room of the Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, at the Adelphi, by James Barry, R.A., Professor of Painting to the Royal Academy ; reprinted in the last quarto edition of his Works.] 25

" —— it must be honestly confessed, that in what is called knowledge of the figure foreigners have justly observed," &c.

It is a secret well-known to the professors of the art and mystery of criticism, to insist upon what they do not find in a man's works, and to pass over in silence what they do. That 30 Hogarth did not draw the naked figure so well as Michael Angelo, might be allowed ; especially as "examples of the naked," as Mr. Barry acknowledges, "rarely (he might almost have said never) occur in his subjects ;" and that his figures

under their draperies do not discover all the fine graces of an Antinous or an Apollo, may be conceded likewise ; perhaps it was more suitable to his purpose to represent the average forms of mankind in the mediocrity (as Mr. Burke expresses it) of the age in which he lived : but that his figures in general, and in his best subjects, are so glaringly incorrect as is here insinuated, I dare trust my own eye so far as positively to deny the fact. And there is one part of the figure in which Hogarth is allowed to have excelled, which these foreigners seem to have overlooked, or perhaps calculating from its proportion to the whole (a seventh or an eighth, I forget which) deemed it of trifling importance ; I mean the human face ; a small part, reckoning by geographical inches, in the map of man's body, but here it is that the painter of expression must condense the wonders of his skill, even at the expense of neglecting the "junctures and other difficulties of drawing in the limbs," which it must be a cold eye that in the interest so strongly demanded by Hogarth's countenances has leisure to survey and censure.

"The line of art pursued by my very ingenious predecessor and brother academician, Mr. Penny."

The first impression caused in me by reading this passage, was an eager desire to know who this Mr. Penny was. This great surpasser of Hogarth in the "delicacy of his relish," and the "line which he pursued," where is he, what are his works, what has he to show? In vain I tried to recollect, till by happily putting the question to a friend who is more conversant in the works of the illustrious obscure than myself, I learnt that he was the painter of a *Death of Wolfe* which missed the prize the year that the celebrated picture of West on the same subject obtained it ; that he also made a picture of the *Marquis of Granby relieving a Sick Soldier* ; moreover, that he was the inventor of two pictures of *Suspended and Restored Animation*, which I now remember to have seen in

the Exhibition some years since, and the prints from which are still extant in good men's houses. This then, I suppose, is the line of subjects in which Mr. Penny was so much superior to Hogarth. I confess I am not of that opinion. The relieving of poverty by the purse, and the restoring a 5 young man to his parents by using the methods prescribed by the Humane Society, are doubtless very amiable subjects, pretty things to teach the first rudiments of humanity ; they amount to about as much instruction as the stories of good boys that give away their custards to poor beggar-boys in 10 children's books. But, good God ! is this *milk for babes* to be set up in opposition to Hogarth's moral scenes, his *strong meat for men*? As well might we prefer the fulsome verses upon their own goodness, to which the gentlemen of the Literary Fund annually sit still with such shameless patience to listen, 15 to the satires of Juvenal and Persius : because the former are full of tender images of Worth relieved by Charity, and Charity stretching out her hand to rescue sinking Genius, and the theme of the latter is men's crimes and follies with their black consequences — forgetful meanwhile of those strains of moral 20 pathos, those sublime heart-touches, which these poets (in *them* chiefly showing themselves poets) are perpetually darting across the otherwise appalling gloom of their subject — consolatory remembrancers, when their pictures of guilty mankind have made us even to despair for our species, that there is 25 such a thing as virtue and moral dignity in the world, that her unquenchable spark is not utterly out — refreshing admonitions, to which we turn for shelter from the too great heat and asperity of the general satire.

And is there nothing analogous to this in Hogarth? nothing 30 which "attempts and reaches the heart?" — no aim beyond that of "shaking the sides?" — If the kneeling ministering female in the last scene of the *Rake's Progress*, the Bedlam scene, of which I have spoken before, and have dared almost to

parallel it with the most absolute idea of Virtue which Shakespeare has left us, be not enough to disprove the assertion ; if the sad endings of the *Harlot* and the *Rake*, the passionate heart-bleeding entreaties for forgiveness which the adulterous wife is pouring forth to her assassinated and dying lord in the last scene but one of the *Marriage à-la-mode*, — if these be not things to touch the heart, and dispose the mind to a meditative tenderness : is there nothing sweetly conciliatory in the mild, patient face and gesture with which the wife seems to allay and ventilate the feverish irritated feelings of her poor poverty-distracted mate (the true copy of the *genus irritabile*) in the print of the *Distressed Poet*? or if an image of maternal love be required, where shall we find a sublimer view of it than in that aged woman in *Industry and Idleness* (plate V.) who is clinging with the fondness of hope not quite extinguished to her brutal vice-hardened child, whom she is accompanying to the ship which is to bear him away from his native soil, of which he has been adjudged unworthy ; in whose shocking face every trace of the human countenance seems obliterated, and a brute beast's to be left instead, shocking and repulsive to all but her who watched over it in its cradle before it was so sadly altered, and feels it must belong to her while a pulse by the vindictive laws of his country shall be suffered to continue to beat in it. Compared with such things, what is Mr. Penny's “knowledge of the figure and academical skill which Hogarth wanted ?”

With respect to what follows concerning another gentleman, with the congratulations to him on his escape out of the regions of “humour and caricatura,” in which it appears he was in danger of travelling side by side with Hogarth, I can only congratulate my country, that Mrs. Hogarth knew *her* province better than by disturbing her husband at his palette to divert him from that universality of subject, which has stamped him perhaps, next to Shakespeare, the most inventive

genius which this island has produced, into the "amiable pursuit of beautiful nature," *i.e.*, copying *ad infinitum* the individual charms and graces of Mrs. H—.

"Hogarth's method of exposing meanness, deformity, and vice, paddling in whatever is ridiculous, faulty, and vicious." 5

A person unacquainted with the works thus stigmatized, would be apt to imagine, that in Hogarth there was nothing else to be found but subjects of the coarsest and most repulsive nature; that his imagination was naturally unsweet, and that he delighted in raking into every species of moral filth; that 10 he preyed upon sore places only, and took a pleasure in exposing the unsound and rotten parts of human nature. Whereas, with the exception of some of the plates of the *Harlot's Progress*, which are harder in their character than any of the rest of his productions (the *Stages of Cruelty* I omit 15 as mere worthless caricaturas, foreign to his general habits, the offspring of his fancy in some wayward humour), there is scarce one of his pieces where vice is most strongly satirised, in which some figure is not introduced upon which the moral eye may rest satisfied; a face that indicates goodness, or perhaps mere 20 goodhumouredness and carelessness of mind (negation of evil) only, yet enough to give a relaxation to the frowning brow of satire, and keep the general air from tainting. Take the mild supplicating posture of patient poverty in the poor woman that is persuading the pawnbroker to accept her clothes in 25 pledge, in the plate of *Gin Lane*, for an instance. A little does it, a little of the *good* nature overpowers a world of *bad*. One cordial honest laugh of a Tom Jones absolutely clears the atmosphere that was reeking with the black putrefying breathings of a hypocrite Blifil. One homely expostulating shrug 30 from Strap, warms the whole air which the suggestions of a gentlemanly ingratitude from his friend Random had begun to freeze. One "Lord bless us!" of Parson Adams upon the wickedness of the times, exorcises and purges off the mass of

iniquity which the world-knowledge of even a Fielding could cull out and rake together. But of the severer class of Hogarth's performances, enough, I trust, has been said to show that they do not merely shock and repulse ; that there is in them the "scorn of vice" and the "pity" too ; something to touch the heart, and keep alive the sense of moral beauty ; the "lacrymæ rerum," and the sorrowing by which the heart is made better. If they be bad things, then is satire and tragedy a bad thing ; let us proclaim at once an age of gold, and sink the existence of vice and misery in our speculations ; let us

—wink, and shut our apprehensions up
From common sense of what men were and are :

let us *make believe* with the children that everybody is good
and happy, and, with Dr. Swift, write panegyrics upon the
world.

But that larger half of Hogarth's works which were painted more for entertainment than instruction (though such was the suggestiveness of his mind, that there is always something to be learnt from them), his humorous scenes,—are they such as merely to disgust and set us against our species?

The confident assertions of such a man as I consider the late Mr. Barry to have been, have that weight of authority in them which staggers, at first hearing, even a long preconceived opinion. When I read his pathetic admonition concerning the shortness of life, and how much better the little leisure of it were laid out upon "that species of art which is employed about the amiable and the admirable ;" and Hogarth's "method" proscribed as a "dangerous or worthless pursuit," I began to think there was something in it ; that I might have been indulging all my life a passion for the works of this artist, to the utter prejudice of my taste and moral sense ; but my first convictions gradually returned, a world of good-natured English

faces came up one by one to my recollection, and a glance at the matchless *Election Entertainment*, which I have the happiness to have hanging up in my parlour, subverted Mr. Barry's whole theory in an instant.

In that inimitable print (which in my judgment as far 5 exceeds the more known and celebrated *March to Finchley*, as the best comedy exceeds the best farce that ever was written) let a person look till he be saturated, and when he has done 10 wondering at the inventiveness of genius which could bring so many characters (more than thirty distinct classes of face) into a room, and set them down at table together, or otherwise dispose them about, in so natural a manner, engage them in so many easy sets and occupations, yet all partaking of the spirit of the occasion which brought them together, so that we 15 feel that nothing but an election time could have assembled them; having no central figure or principal group (for the hero of the piece, the Candidate, is properly set aside in the levelling indistinction of the day, one must look for him to find him), nothing to detain the eye from passing from part to part, where every part is alike instinct with life,—for here are no 20 furniture-faces, no figures brought in to fill up the scene like stage choruses, but all *dramatis personæ*: when he shall have done wondering at all these faces so strongly charactered, yet finished with the accuracy of the finest miniature; when he shall have done admiring the numberless appendages of the 25 scene, those gratuitous doles which rich genius flings into the heap when it has already done enough, the over-measure which it delights in giving, as if it felt its stores were exhaustless; the dumb rhetoric of the scenery—for tables, and chairs, and joint-stools in Hogarth, are living and significant things; 30 the witticisms that are expressed by words (all artists but Hogarth have failed when they have endeavoured to combine two mediums of expression, and have introduced words into their pictures), and the unwritten numberless little allusive

pleasantries that are scattered about ; the work that is going on in the scene and beyond it, as is made visible to the "eye of mind," by the mob which chokes up the door-way, and the sword that has forced an entrance before its master : when he 5 shall have sufficiently admired this wealth of genius, let him fairly say what is the *result* left on his mind. Is it an impression of the vileness and worthlessness of his species? or is not the general feeling which remains, after the individual faces have ceased to act sensibly on his mind, a *kindly one in favour* 10 *of his species?* was not the general air of the scene wholesome? did it do the heart hurt to be among it? Something of a riotous spirit to be sure is there, some worldly-mindedness in some of the faces, a Doddingtonian smoothness which does not promise any superfluous degree of sincerity in the fine 15 gentleman who has been the occasion of calling so much good company together : but is not the general cast of expression in the faces, of the good sort? do they not seem cut out of the *good old rock*, substantial English honesty? would one fear treachery among characters of their expression? or shall we 20 call their honest mirth and seldom-returning relaxation by the hard names of vice and profligacy? That poor country fellow, that is grasping his staff (which, from that difficulty of feeling themselves at home which poor men experience at a *feast*, he has never parted with since he came into the room), and is 25 enjoying with a relish that seems to fit all the capacities of his soul the slender joke, which that facetious wag his neighbour is practising upon the gouty gentleman, whose eyes the effort to suppress pain has made as round as rings — does it shock the "dignity of human nature" to look at that man, and to sympathize 30 with him in the seldom-heard joke which has unbent his care-worn hard-working visage, and drawn iron smiles from it? or with that full-hearted cobbler, who is honouring with the grasp of an honest fist the unused palm of that annoyed patrician, whom the licence of the time has seated next him?

I can see nothing "dangerous" in the contemplation of such scenes as this, or the *Enraged Musician*, or the *Southwark Fair*, or twenty other pleasant prints which come crowding in upon my recollection, in which the restless activities, the diversified bents and humours, the blameless peculiarities 5 of men, as they deserve to be called, rather than their "vices and follies," are held up in a laughable point of view. All laughter is not of a dangerous or soul-hardening tendency. There is the petrifying sneer of a demon which excludes and kills Love, and there is the cordial laughter of a man which 10 implies and cherishes it. What heart was ever made the worse by joining in a hearty laugh at the simplicities of Sir Hugh Evans or Parson Adams, where a sense of the ridiculous mutually kindles and is kindled by a perception of the amiable? That tumultuous harmony of singers that are roaring out the 15 words, "The world shall bow to the Assyrian throne," from the opera of *Judith*, in the third plate of the series, called the *Four Groups of Heads*; which the quick eye of Hogarth must have struck off in the very infancy of the rage for sacred oratorios in this country, while "Music yet was young;" 20 when we have done smiling at the deafening distortions, which these tearers of devotion to rags and tatters, these takers of Heaven by storm, in their boisterous mimicry of the occupation of angels, are making,—what unkindly impression is left behind, or what more of harsh or contemptuous 25 feeling, than when we quietly leave Uncle Toby and Mr. Shandy riding their hobby-horses about the room? The conceited, long-backed Sign-painter, that with all the self-applause of a Raphael or Correggio (the twist of body which his conceit has thrown him into has something of the Correg- 30 giesque in it) is contemplating the picture of a bottle which he is drawing from an actual bottle that hangs beside him, in the print of *Beer Street*,—while we smile at the enormity of the self-delusion, can we help loving the good-humour

and self-complacency of the fellow? would we willingly wake him from his dream?

I say not that all the ridiculous subjects of Hogarth have necessarily something in them to make us like them; some 5 are indifferent to us, some in their natures repulsive, and only made interesting by the wonderful skill and truth to nature in the painter; but I contend that there is in most of them that sprinkling of the better nature, which, like holy water, chases away and disperses the contagion of the bad. They have 10 this in them besides, that they bring us acquainted with the every-day human face,—they give us skill to detect those gradations of sense and virtue (which escape the careless or fastidious observer) in the countenances of the world about us; and prevent that disgust at common life, that *tedium 15 quotidianarum formarum*, which an unrestricted passion for ideal forms and beauties is in danger of producing. In this, as in many other things, they are analogous to the best novels of Smollett or Fielding.

XXXVII. ON THE POETICAL WORKS OF GEORGE WITHER

THE poems of George Wither are distinguished by a hearty 20 homeliness of manner, and a plain moral speaking. He seems to have passed his life in one continued act of an innocent self-pleasing. That which he calls his *Motto* is a continued self-eulogy of two thousand lines, yet we read it to the end without any feeling of distaste, almost without a consciousness 25 that we have been listening all the while to a man praising himself. There are none of the cold particles in it, the hardness and self-ends which render vanity and egotism hateful. He seems to be praising another person, under the mask of

self; or rather we feel that it was indifferent to him where he found the virtue which he celebrates; whether another's bosom, or his own, were its chosen receptacle. His poems are full, and this in particular is one downright confession, of a generous self-seeking. But by self he sometimes means 5 a great deal,—his friends, his principles, his country, the human race.

Whoever expects to find in the satirical pieces of this writer any of those peculiarities which pleased him in the satires of Dryden or Pope, will be grievously disappointed. Here are 10 no high-finished characters, no nice traits of individual nature, few or no personalities. The game run down is coarse general vice, or folly as it appears in classes. A liar, a drunkard, a coxcomb, is *strip and whipt*; no Shaftesbury, no Villiers, or Wharton, is curiously anatomized, and read upon. But to 15 a well-natured mind there is a charm of moral sensibility running through them which amply compensates the want of those luxuries. Wither seems everywhere bursting with a love of goodness, and a hatred of all low and base actions.— At this day it is hard to discover what parts in the poem here 20 particularly alluded to, *Abuses Strip and Whipt*, could have occasioned the imprisonment of the author. Was Vice in High Places more suspicious than now? had she more power; or more leisure to listen after ill reports? That a man should be convicted of a libel when he named no names but Hate, 25 and Envy, and Lust, and Avarice, is like one of the indictments in the Pilgrim's Progress, where Faithful is arraigned for having “railed on our noble Prince Beelzebub, and spoken contemptibly of his honourable friends, the Lord Old Man, the Lord Carnal Delight, and the Lord Luxurious.” What 30 unlucky jealousy could have tempted the great men of those days to appropriate such innocent abstractions to themselves!

Wither seems to have contemplated to a degree of idolatry his own possible virtue. He is forever anticipating persecution

and martyrdom ; fingering, as it were, the flames, to try how he can bear them. Perhaps his premature defiance sometimes made him obnoxious to censures, which he would otherwise have slipped by.

5 The homely versification of these Satires is not likely to attract in the present day. It is certainly not such as we should expect from a poet "soaring in the high region of his fancies with his garland and his singing robes about him;"¹ nor is it such as he has shown in his *Philarete*, and in some 10 parts of his *Shepherds Hunting*. He seems to have adopted this dress with voluntary humility, as fittest for a moral teacher, as our divines choose sober gray or black ; but in their humility consists their sweetness. The deepest tone of moral feeling in them, (though all throughout is weighty, earnest, and passionate) is in those pathetic injunctions against shedding of blood in 15 quarrels, in the chapter entitled *Revenge*. The story of his own forbearance, which follows, is highly interesting. While the Christian sings his own victory over Anger, the Man of Courage cannot help peeping out to let you know that it was some higher 20 principle than *fear* which counselled his forbearance.

Whether engaged, or roaming at liberty, Wither never seems to have abated a jot of that free spirit, which sets its mark upon his writings, as much as a predominant feature of independence impresses every page of our late glorious Burns ; but 25 the elder poet wraps his proof-armour closer about him, the other wears his too much outwards ; he is thinking too much of annoying the foe, to be quite easy within ; the spiritual defences of Wither are a perpetual source of inward sunshine ; the magnanimity of the modern is not without its alloy of 30 soreness, and a sense of injustice which seems perpetually to gall and irritate. Wither was better skilled in the "sweet uses of adversity," he knew how to extract the "precious jewel" from the head of the "toad," without drawing any of the

¹ Milton.

“ugly venom” along with it. — The prison notes of Wither are finer than the wood notes of most of his poetical brethren. The description in the Fourth Eclogue of his *Shepherds Hunting* (which was composed during his imprisonment in the Marshalsea) of the power of the Muse to extract pleasure from common objects, has been oftener quoted, and is more known, than any part of his writings. Indeed the whole Eclogue is in a strain so much above, not only what himself, but almost what any other poet has written, that he himself could not help noticing it; he remarks, that his spirits had been raised higher than they were wont “through the love of poesy.” — The praises of Poetry have been often sung in ancient and in modern times; strange powers have been ascribed to it of influence over animate and inanimate auditors; its force over fascinated crowds has been acknowledged; but, before Wither, no one ever celebrated its power *at home*, the wealth and the strength which this divine gift confers upon its possessor. Fame, and that too after death, was all which hitherto the poets had promised themselves from their art. It seems to have been left to Wither to discover, that poetry was a present possession, as well as a rich reversion; and that the Muse had promise of both lives, of this, and of that which was to come.

The *Mistress of Philarete* is in substance a panegyric protracted through several thousand lines in the mouth of a single speaker, but diversified, so as to produce an almost dramatic effect, by the artful introduction of some ladies, who are rather auditors than interlocutors in the scene; and of a boy, whose singing furnishes pretence for an occasional change of metre: though the seven-syllable line, in which the main part of it is written, is that in which Wither has shown himself so great a master, that I do not know that I am always thankful to him for the exchange.

Wither has chosen to bestow upon the lady whom he commends, the name of Arete, or Virtue; and assuming to himself

the character of Philarete, or Lover of Virtue, there is a sort of propriety in that heaped measure of perfections, which he attributes to this partly real, partly allegorical, personage. Drayton before him had shadowed his mistress under the name of Idea, or Perfect Pattern, and some of the old Italian love-strains are couched in such religious terms as to make it doubtful whether it be a mistress, or Divine Grace, which the poet is addressing.

In this poem (full of beauties) there are two passages of pre-eminent merit. The first is where the lover, after a flight of rapturous commendation, expresses his wonder why all men that are about his mistress, even to her very servants, do not view her with the same eyes that he does.

Sometime I do admire

15 All men burn not with desire :
 Nay, I muse her servants are not
 Pleading love ; but O ! they dare not
 And I therefore wonder, why
 They do not grow sick and die.

20 Sure they would do so, but that,
 By the ordinance of fate,
 There is some concealed thing,
 So each gazer limiting,
 He can see no more of merit,

25 Than beseems his worth and spirit.
 For in her a grace there shines,
 That o'er-daring thoughts confines,
 Making worthless men despair
 To be loved of one so fair.

30 Yea, the destinies agree,
 Some *good judgments* blind should be,
 And not gain the power of knowing
 Those rare beauties in her growing.
 Reason doth as much imply :

35 For, if every judging eye,

Which beholdeth her, should there
 Find what excellencies are,
 All, o'ercome by those perfections,
 Would be captive to affections.
 So, in happiness unblest,
 She for lovers should not rest.

5

The other is, where he has been comparing her beauties to gold, and stars, and the most excellent things in nature ; and, fearing to be accused of hyperbole, the common charge against poets, vindicates himself by boldly taking upon him, that these 10 comparisons are no hyperboles ; but that the best things in nature do, in a lover's eye, fall short of those excellencies which he adores in her.

What pearls, what rubies can
 Seem so lovely fair to man,
 As her lips whom he doth love,
 When in sweet discourse they move,
 Or her lovelier teeth, the while
 She doth bless him with a smile ?
 Stars indeed fair creatures be ;
 Yet amongst us where is he
 Joys not more the whilst he lies
 Sunning in his mistress' eyes,
 Than in all the glimmering light
 Of a starry winter's night ?
 Note the beauty of an eye —
 And if aught you praise it by
 Leave such passion in your mind,
 Let my reason's eye be blind.

15

20

25

Mark if ever red or white
 Anywhere gave such delight,
 As when they have taken place
 In a worthy woman's face.

30

* * * * *

I must praise her as I may,
 Which I do mine own rude way,
 Sometimes setting forth her glories
 By unheard-of allegories — &c.

5 To the measure in which these lines are written, the wits of Queen Anne's days contemptuously gave the name of Namby Pamby, in ridicule of Ambrose Philips, who has used it in some instances, as in the lines on Cuzzoni, to my feeling, at least, very deliciously ; but Wither, whose darling measure it seems
 10 to have been, may show, that in skilful hands it is capable of expressing the subtlest movements of passion. So true it is, which Drayton seems to have felt, that it is the poet who modifies the metre, not the metre the poet ; in his own words, that

15 'Tis possible to climb ;
 To kindle, or to stake ;
 Altho' in Skelton's rhyme.¹

¹ A long line is a line we are long repeating. In the *Shepherds Hunting* take the following —

If thy verse doth bravely tower,
As she makes wing, she gets power;
 Yet the higher she doth soar,
 She's affronted still the more,
 Till she to the high'st hath past,
 Then she rests with fame at last.

What longer measure can go beyond the majesty of this ? what *Alexandrine* is half so long in pronouncing, or expresses *labour slowly but strongly surmounting difficulty* with the life with which it is done in the second of these lines ? or what metre would go beyond these, from *Philarete* —

Her true beauty leaves behind
 Apprehensions in my mind
 Of more sweetness, than all art
 Or inventions can impart.
Thoughts too deep to be express'd,
And too strong to be suppress'd.

NOTES

I. A CHARACTER OF THE LATE ELIA

BY A FRIEND

London Magazine, January, 1823

This paper was first published by Lamb in the interval between the two series of *Essays of Elia*. He seems to have intended it partly as a farewell to his readers, and partly as a piece of mystification. With the omission of the latter part, it was reprinted by Moxon in 1833 as an appropriate preface to Lamb's last essays. This apologetic self-revelation and humorous analysis of his own character, half ironical though it be, shows the causes of his unpopularity and is a valuable commentary on his style.

1. **the late Elia.** When Lamb began to write for the *London Magazine* in August, 1820, he assumed the pen name of Elia (pronounced by him Ell-ia) in memory of an obscure Italian clerk of this name whom he had known at the South-Sea House.

1 3-4. **to see his papers collected into a volume.** This volume included Elia's twenty-eight contributions to the *London Magazine*, August, 1820, to November, 1822, and an essay on *Valentine's Day* from the *Indicator* of February, 1821. It was issued from the press of Taylor and Hessey, London, 1823. "Eleven years after," says Mr. Charles Kent, "before the author's death, it was already out of print, a stray copy only by rare chance being purchasable at a book-stall."

1 4-5. **the London Magazine** appeared in January, 1820, as a monthly under the editorial direction of John Scott. Thirteen months later, when Scott was killed in a duel with Christie of *Blackwood's Magazine*, the *London* passed into the hands of Taylor and Hessey. In the five years of its existence, though not financially successful, it had many famous contributors, among them being Lamb, De Quincey, Hazlitt, Procter, Hood, Cary, Cunningham, Montgomery, Keats, Mitford, Reynolds, and Carlyle.

17. **Saint Bride's**: a church just off Fleet Street, London. It is the burial place of Richardson, and is closely associated with Milton, Lovelace, and Dr. Johnson.

19. **his friends T. and H.**: Taylor and Hessey, the publishers of the *London*.

111. **Janus wept**: a play on the name of the Roman god and the pen name of Wainwright, "Janus Weathercock," a contributor to the *London* of "articles of flashy assumption." This clever, heartless, voluptuous coxcomb subsequently committed murder.

111-12. **The gentle P—r**: Bryan Weller Procter, better known as "Barry Cornwall" (1790-1874), a poet of the Cockney school, who made considerable reputation as a writer of sea songs. He was much liked by Lamb and wrote a memoir of him.

113. **Allan C.**: Cunningham (1784-1842), a Scotch poet and man of letters, who was at this time (1823) secretary to Chantrey, a London sculptor. He was the author of popular songs, stories, and biographies of eminent British painters, sculptors, and architects.

113. **nobly forgetful**: a reference to some unappreciative remarks about the Scotch in Lamb's essay on *Imperfect Sympathies*.

114-15. **a "Tale of Lyddalcross"**: one of *Cunningham's Traditional Tales of the Peasantry*.

28. **a country-boy**: Coleridge. See note to *Christ's Hospital*.

324. **intimados**: intimate friends.

44. **Marry**: an old English interjection or expletive, derived from Mary.

46-7. **proceeded a statist**: i.e. discoursed as eloquently as a statesman.

416. **Shacklewell**. See note to the *South-Sea House*.

428-29. **toga virilis**: the garment assumed by a young Roman on reaching manhood.

433. This passage, inclosed in brackets, appeared in the *London*, but was suppressed in the volume of the *Last Essays of Elia* (1833).

434. **his cousin Bridget**: the author's sister Mary.

57. **the East India House**. The old house of the East India Company (established in 1600) stood at the corner of Leadenhall and Lime Streets, London.

529. **facetious Bishop Corbet**: Richard Corbet (1582-1635), bishop of Oxford and Norwich. He was the author of *Farewell to the Fairies*, and other light verse.

529. **Hoole, John (1727-1803)**: an English poet who translated Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, and other Italian poems.

530-31. **God assoil him therefor**: i.e. May God forgive him for it.

5 31. **Walton, Izaak (1593-1683)**: a noted author who was a shop-keeper in London until the civil war. Lamb wrote of him to Wordsworth as hallowing "any page in which his revered name appears." His most famous book is the *Complete Angler* (1653), which Lamb "always loved as it were a living friend."

6 1. **bon-vivant**: jolly companion.

6 14. "weaved-up follies": a phrase from Shakespeare's *Richard II*, IV, i, 228.

II. THE SOUTH-SEA HOUSE

London Magazine, August, 1820

This essay was first printed under the title of *Recollections of the South-Sea House*. Lamb held a subordinate clerkship in this house for an unknown period between 1789 and 1792. It appears from the official records of the company for the latter year that his brother John was then holding the position of deputy accountant.

6 15. **the Bank**: the Bank of England.

6 17. **the Flower Pot**: a London inn from which the coach for the north started.

6 18. **Dalston or Shacklewell**: northern suburbs of London where rents were low, and where consequently many "lean annuitants," persons of small yearly income, resided.

7 12-13. **the two first monarchs of the Brunswick dynasty**: George I (1714-1727) and George II (1727-1760).

7 18. **pieces of eight**: a name given by the buccaneers to the Spanish piaster, which was divided into eight silver reals. It was first coined in 1479, and was about equal in value to our dollar.

7 19. "unsunned heap": a phrase from Milton's *Comus*, l. 398.

7 19. **Mammon**: a Syriac word meaning riches; personified as the god of riches by Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, II, 7, and Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I, 678.

7 21. **that famous Bubble**: the South-Sea Bubble, a colossal financial scheme which originated about 1711 and collapsed in 1720. It was one of the principal events of George I's reign. For a detailed account of the series of ruinous speculations connected with this and other bubble companies, see Montgomery's *English History*, p. 311, or Green's *Short History of the English People*, p. 698.

7 32. **a superfœtation of dirt**: a secondary engendering, i.e. a double layer, of dirt.

86. **Titan.** The Titans were a race of giants, children of Uranus (heaven) and Gaea (earth), who made war against the Olympian deities.

86-7. **Vaux's superhuman plot:** the plot of Guido Vaux, or Guy Fawkes, and other conspirators to blow up the Houses of Parliament in 1605.

91. **Herculaneum:** one of the cities buried by the eruption of Vesuvius in A.D. 79. The first systematic excavations were made under French rule between 1806 and 1815.

91. **pounce-boxes:** boxes with perforated lids for sprinkling a fine powder on manuscript to prevent the ink from spreading.

92. **Cambro-Briton:** a Welshman. Cambria was the legendary and ancient Latin name of Wales.

927. **Maccaronies** (properly spelled Macaronies): the name usually applied to English fops during the later part of the eighteenth century.

101. **Anderton's:** a coffeehouse on Fleet Street.

1014. **Rosamond's Pond:** a sheet of water in St. James Park, which was filled up in 1770. It was "long consecrated to disastrous love and elegiac poetry." "Fair Rosamond" was Jane Clifford, the mistress of Henry II, who, according to tradition, was compelled by the jealous Queen Eleanor to poison herself (1176).

1014-15. **Mulberry Gardens:** public gardens (now in the grounds of Buckingham Palace), so called from the mulberry trees planted by James I.

1015. **Cheap,** the old name of Cheapside, a street rich in historical associations.

1017. **Hogarth.** See note on the essay *On the Genius and Character of Hogarth.*

1018. **Noon.** The scene of "Noon" is a French Huguenot chapel in Hog Lane.

1019-20. **Louis the Fourteenth;** King of France, 1643-1715. By his revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, which had since 1598 granted to the Huguenots political equality and rights with the Catholics, he drove about fifty thousand industrious Protestant families from France, prostrated the country, and paved the way for the Revolution.

1022. **the Seven Dials:** a locality about midway between the British Museum and Trafalgar Square, and once notorious as a center of poverty. It took its name from a column with seven sundials which marked the meeting of seven streets.

1023. **Thomas Tame:** he succeeded Evans as deputy cashier in 1793.

1025-26. **Westminster Hall:** built by William II. It is now used as an entrance to the Houses of Parliament.

10 34. **its original state of white paper**: a figure used by John Locke, who denied the existence of innate ideas, to illustrate the condition of the child's mind before the use of the senses.

11 1. **posed**: puzzled him by putting a question.

11 9-10. **unfortunate house of Derwentwater**. James Radcliffe (1689-1716), Earl of Derwentwater, was an English Catholic nobleman who supported the Pretender in the rebellion of 1715, and was beheaded in London in the following year.

11 19. **John Tipp**: he was succeeded in the office of deputy accountant by John Lamb, and became accountant in 1792.

11 24-25. **with other notes than to the Orphean lyre**: a quotation from *Paradise Lost*, III, 17.

12 5. **He sate like Lord Midas**: i.e. without any skill in judging of music. Justice Midas is a character in a play by Kane O'Hara (1764). When, in a singing contest, he awards the prize to Pan, it turns out that Apollo was one of the competitors. The classical King Midas was punished with asses' ears for a similar offense.

13 12. "greatly find quarrel in a straw": a quotation from *Hamlet*, IV, iv, 53-56.

13 20. **the dusty dead**: a phrase from *Macbeth*, V, v, 22.

13 26-27. **in two forgotten volumes**. *Miscellaneous Works in Verse and Prose of the late Henry Man* is a collection of light and amusing papers on a variety of subjects. Man became deputy secretary in 1793.

13 28. **Barbican**: a street in London where Milton lived in 1645. Leigh Hunt's pig in his essay *On the Graces and Anxieties of Pig-Driving* "was not to be comforted in Barbican."

13 31. "new-born **gauds**": a phrase from *Troilus and Cressida*, III, iii, 175.

13 32. **Public Ledgers . . . Chronicles**. Two prominent London newspapers of the eighteenth century.

13 32-34. **Chatham**, Earl of (1708-1778), William Pitt; **Shelburne**, Earl of (1737-1805), William Petty, as prime minister recognized American independence; **Rockingham**, Marquis of (1730-1782), Charles Wentworth, preceded Shelburne as prime minister; **Howe**, Sir William (d. 1814), a British general in the American war; **Burgoyne**, John, a British general who surrendered to the Americans at Saratoga in 1777; **Clinton**, Sir Henry, a British general in the same war.

14 1-2. **Keppel**: an English admiral; **Wilkes**, John (1727-1797), editor of the *North Britain*, was arrested on the charge of accusing the king of falsehood, but liberated under the order of Chief Justice **Pratt** (Charles; 1713-1794), afterwards Lord Chancellor and Earl of

Camden; **Sawbridge and Bull**, Lord Mayors of London in latter part of the eighteenth century; **Dunning**, John (1731-1783), Lord Ashburton, author of a bill in the House of Commons to diminish the influence of the Crown; **Richmond**, probably a member of the Rockingham ministry.

14 5. **Plumer**, Richard: master of the Hertfordshire mansion in which Lamb's grandmother, Mary Field, was housekeeper for fifty years; hence his interest in the family. Plumer was deputy secretary in 1800.

14 7. **the sinister bend**: also called "the bastard bar," a term in heraldry indicating illegitimacy.

14 12. **bachelor-uncle**. According to the family pedigree found in Cussans' *Hertfordshire*, Walter Plumer, the uncle of William Plumer, was not a bachelor.

14 18. **Cave came off cleverly**: an inaccuracy of Lamb's. Cave, not Plumer, was cited before the House of Commons on a breach of privilege for having challenged a frank given to the Duchess of Marlborough by Walter Plumer, M.P. See Johnson's *Life of Cave*.

14 24. **pastoral M**—: T. Maynard, who was chief clerk of the old annuities and three-per-cents from 1788 to 1793, and who, according to Lamb's Key, hanged himself.

14 26. **that song sung by Amiens**: *As You Like It*, II, vii.

15 10-11. **peradventure the very names . . . are fantastic**: an example of Lamb's fondness for mystification. The names in this essay are not fictitious but are found in the *Royal Calendar* and other records.

15 11-12. **like Henry Pimpernel, and old John Naps of Greece**. These names are mentioned in the Induction to the *Taming of the Shrew* as never having existed.

Review Questions. 1. What is Lamb's attitude to his reader? 2. Where does he show a fondness for the past? 3. Find indications of his business training. 4. What impression do you get of his scholarship and range of reading? 5. Analyze the humor in his characterization of Evans, Tame, Tipp, and Plumer. 6. Find examples of Lamb's use of the pun. 7. Explain the following phrases: "his mind was in its original state of white paper," *decus et solamen*, "Orphean lyre," "like Lord Midas," "nib a pen," "wet a wafer," "triple calumniations (f. s. d.)," "superfluity of ciphers," "Conduit in Cheap," and "night's wheels." 8. Note use of the following words: Titan, Herculaneum, Cambro-Briton, Maccaronies, Whig, gibcat, hypochondry, pounce-boxes, battening, manes, tomes, rubric, quirk, and gibes.

III. OXFORD IN THE VACATION

London Magazine, October, 1820

This second contribution from Elia was given the place of honor in the *London*. At the close was the date of its composition, "August 5th, 1820," and the words "From my rooms facing the Bodleian." On leaving Christ's Hospital, Lamb was prevented by poverty and physical infirmity from entering Oxford or Cambridge with his more fortunate schoolmates Coleridge, Hunt, Dyer, Field, and Barnes. He loved, however, to spend his annual holidays amid the associations of those great universities. The charm which these visits had for him is touchingly recorded in his Cambridge sonnet,

"I was not trained in Academic bowers."

15 19. **Vivares**, François (1709-1780): a French landscape painter who went to London at the age of eighteen and became one of the founders of landscape engraving in England.

15 19. **Woollett**, William (1735-1785): the most distinguished of the English landscape engravers.

15 25. **notched and cropt scrivener**: an attorney or money lender with close-cut hair. "Notched" may refer to his desk or his quill or the tallies by which he kept his accounts.

15 28. **agnize**: acknowledge. Cf. *Othello*, I, iii, 232.

16 25. "Andrew and John, men famous in old times": probably paraphrased from Milton, *Paradise Regained*, II, 7. Lamb refers to those days of the calendar which were once observed as religious holidays in honor of certain saints.

16 28. **the old Basket Prayer-book**: a little duodecimo prayer-book (1749), so named from the publisher T. Baskett (misspelled by Lamb).

16 28-29. **Peter in his uneasy posture**: according to tradition this apostle was crucified head downward. The day sacred to him in the calendar is June 29.

16 29. **holy Bartlemy**: Saint Bartholomew, one of the twelve apostles, commonly called Nathanael. Tradition says that he was flayed alive. The day sacred to him is August 24.

16 30. **the famous Marsyas by Spagnoletti** (Lamb's spelling): a painting of Apollo flaying the satyr, by the Spanish-Neapolitan artist, Jusepe Ribera Spagnoletto (1588-1656).

17 5. "far off their coming shone": a paraphrase from *Paradise Lost*, VI, 768.

17 17. **Selden**, John (1584-1654): a jurist, antiquarian, orientalist, and author of legal and theological works. He represented Oxford in Parliament, and was afterwards Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He was one of the most learned men of the century.

17 17. **Archbishop Usher**, James (1580-1656): an Irish theologian and scholar who wrote a notable work on biblical chronology. He became primate of Ireland and took sides with Charles I.

17 19. **the mighty Bodley**: the Bodleian Library of Oxford University, which contains about four hundred and sixty thousand books, twenty-seven thousand manuscripts, and fifty thousand coins. It was first opened in 1488, but was refounded by Sir Thomas Bodley (1545-1613), an English scholar and diplomat.

17 27. **I seem admitted ad eundem**: admitted without loss of class standing in going from one university to another.

17 29. **a Sixar** at Cambridge and a **Servitor** at Oxford were originally paid students who were exempt from paying the ordinary fees, but waited on the tables at the mess or performed other menial duties.

17 30. **a Gentleman Commoner**: a student who paid full fees and enjoyed special privileges.

18 5. **Christ's**: Christ Church, one of the largest and most fashionable colleges of Oxford, founded by Cardinal Wolsey in 1525.

18 5. **Magdalen**: St. Mary Magdalen College of Oxford, founded by Bishop Waynflete in 1457.

18 13-14. **spits which have cooked for Chaucer**. There is no evidence that Chaucer (1340?-1400) was ever a student at either Oxford or Cambridge.

18 16. **a Manciple**: the officer who had the care of purchasing food for the college. Cf. Chaucer's *Prologue*, 567.

18 22. **what half Januses are we**: Janus was the god of the rising and setting sun, and was represented with two faces.

19 12-13. **Herculaneean raker**. Some charred papyrus rolls were found in a buried library at Herculaneum.

19 13. **the three witnesses**: a reference to the disputed passage in 1 John v. 7.

19 14. **Porson**, Richard (1759-1808): a professor at Cambridge, who was a noted Greek scholar and editor of the classics.

19 15. **G. D.**: George Dyer (1755-1841), one of Lamb's schoolmates at Christ's Hospital, and afterwards a student at Cambridge. Later he became a booksellers' drudge, compiling indexes and editing the Valpy edition of the classics. His best known works are his *History of the University and Colleges of Cambridge* and a *Life of Robert Robinson*.

His awkwardness, absent-mindedness, bland credulity, and pedantry made him the butt of Lamb's affectionate banter and practical jokes. He is the hero of Elia's essay *Amicus Redivivus*.

19 17. **Oriel**: a college of Oxford, founded by Adam de Brome and Edward II in 1326.

19 20. **a tall Scapula**. Scapula pirated Stephen's *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* in 1530. A tall book is one whose leaves are not cut down in binding.

20 3. **Clifford's Inn**: one of the inns of chancery in London, originally a law school dating from the reign of Edward III.

20 7. "in calm and sinless peace": a reminiscence of Wordsworth's *White Doe of Rylstone*, l. 48.

21 9. **the Temple**. See note on *The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple*.

21 12. **our friend M.'s**: Basil Montagu, Q. C., editor of Bacon.

21 20. **Mrs. M.**: Mrs. Montagu, mentioned in Carlyle's *Reminiscences*, and called by Irving "a noble lady."

21 21. **Queen Lar**: the chief of the domestic divinities of the Roman household.

21 21. **pretty A. S.**: Mrs. Montagu's daughter, Anne Skepper. She afterwards married Procter, who vouches for the truth of the incident.

21 28. **like another Sosia**: a slave in Plautus' play *Amphitryon*. Mercury is disguised as the double of Sosia, who is thus led to doubt his own identity.

22 2. **Mount Tabor**: according to tradition the scene of the Transfiguration.

22 3. **Parnassus**: the resort of the Muses.

22 3. **co-sphered with Plato**: i.e. absorbed in philosophic reflections. The ancients believed that the souls of the great dead were stationed in spheres or orbits. Cf. Milton, *Il Penseroso*, 88-92.

22 3. **Harrington, James (1611-1677)**: author of the *Commonwealth of Oceana*, a treatise on civil government, modeled on More's *Utopia*.

22 9. This passage in brackets appeared in the original *London* article but was suppressed by Lamb in the volume of 1823.

22 10. **in the house of "pure Emanuel"**: Emanuel College, Cambridge.

22 23. **Give me Agur's wish**. See Proverbs xxx. 8, 9.

23 14-15. **Bath, Buxton, Scarborough, Harrogate**. These popular English watering places may be located on the map.

23 15-16. **The Cam and the Isis**: the two rivers on which Cambridge and Oxford universities respectively are situated.

23 16-17. "better than all the waters of Damascus." See 2 Kings v. 12.

23 18. **Shepherds on the Delectable Mountains**: the mountains from which the pilgrims in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Part I, had a view of the Celestial City.

23 20-21. **the Interpreter of the House Beautiful**: a character in *Pilgrim's Progress*, Part I, lord of a house a little beyond the Wicket Gate. He symbolizes the Holy Ghost.

Review Questions. 1. Explain the figure at the close of the third paragraph. 2. Has this essay the true flavor of university life and scholarship? 3. Explain the literary allusions in the last paragraph. 4. Analyze the characterization of Dyer. 5. Find an apostrophe and compare with similar passages in Raleigh, Byron, and De Quincey. 6. Note the rambling construction of the essay. 7. Note the phrase "the *better Jude*." Who were the two Judes? 8. Explain the following: agnize, arride, headsman, Joseph's vest, *variae lectiones*, "those sciential apples," Mount Tabor, Parnassus.

IV. CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE-AND-THIRTY YEARS AGO

London Magazine, November, 1820

The Gentleman's Magazine for June, 1813, contained an article by Lamb entitled *Recollections of Christ's Hospital*. This essay was reprinted in Ollier's edition in 1818, and is referred to in the opening sentences of the present paper. Under the mask of Elia, Lamb here writes in the character of his old schoolmate Coleridge. The earlier essay was a serious and enthusiastic appreciation of the dignity and value of the famous Blue-Coat School; the latter was a supplementary chapter on the humors and hardships of the boys due to the peculiar traditions and discipline of the school. On the same subject Coleridge has written in his *Biographia Literaria*, Chap. I, and Leigh Hunt in his *Autobiography*, Chaps. III and IV.

24 18. **banyan . . . days**: the days on which sailors have no allowance of meat. The name is taken from the Hindoo devotees who abstain from flesh.

24 22. **caro equina**: horseflesh.

25 1. **the Tishbite**: the prophet Elijah.

26 15-16. **the Lions in the Tower**. The royal menagerie formerly kept in this the most ancient fortress and state prison of London was removed to the Zoölogical Gardens in Regent's Park in 1834.

26 18. **L.'s governor**: Samuel Salt, the old Bencher of the Inner Temple. He was called to the bench in 1782 and died in 1792. He occupied two sets of chambers in Crown-office Row, kept a carriage, and had two indoor servants besides the Lambs. Lamb's father, John, was in his service for forty-five years as clerk and factotum, his mother as housekeeper. Salt provided for them generously by various bequests at his death. Charles owed his admission to Christ's Hospital to a friend of Salt's.

27 4. **There was one H——**: Hodges, according to Lamb's Key.

27 8. **My friend Tobin**. Little more than his name is known. In a letter to Wordsworth in 1806 Lamb speaks of a visit from Tobin, and records his death in a letter to Southey in 1815. Tobin was Godwin's pen name in his tragedy *Antonio*.

27 18. **Caligula's minion**. The emperor's favorite horse, Incitatus, was fed at a marble manger with gilded oats. He was made a consul and a priest.

28 2. **paintings by Verrio**. In Newgate Street is seen the hall, or eating room, one of the noblest in England, adorned with enormously long paintings by Verrio and others, and with an organ. See Leigh Hunt's *Autobiography*, Chap. III, p. 57.

28 3. **blue-coat boys**. Christ's Hospital was popularly called the Blue-Coat School from the dress of the pupils, which was the ordinary costume of boys in humble station during the time of the Tudors. It consisted of a blue drugget gown with ample skirts, a yellow vest, knee breeches of Russian duck, yellow worsted stockings, a leathern girdle, and a little black worsted cap usually carried in the hand. This costume is still retained. Christ's was founded as a charity school by King Edward VI on the site of the monastery of the Gray Friars in Newgate Street.

28 8. "To feed our mind with idle portraiture": a translation from memory of Virgil's line, *animum pictura pascit inani* (*Aeneid*, I, 464).

28 16-17. "'T was said, He ate strange flesh": quoted at random from *Antony and Cleopatra*, I, iv.

29 14. **Mr. Hathaway**. We of the grammar school used to call him "the yeoman" on account of Shakespeare having married the daughter of a man of that name, designated as "a substantial yeoman" (Leigh Hunt, *Autobiography*, Chap. III, p. 59).

30 8. **Bedlam**: the hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem in London, originally a priory dating from about 1247, but now used as an asylum for the insane.

30 33. **Holy Paul**: St. Paul's Cathedral, in which stands the statue of John Howard.

30 25. *auto da fé* (Portuguese): act of faith. The ceremony used in Spain and Portugal in executing the judgment of the tribunal of the Inquisition. There was a procession of monks, penitents, and heretics through the streets to the church, where, after a sermon, the condemned were handed over to the civil authorities to be strangled or burned.

30 26-27. "watchet weeds": blue clothes.

31 24. *San Benito*: the short linen dress, on which demons were painted, worn by the heretics condemned by the Inquisition.

32 2. *Rev. James Boyer*. According to Lamb, Coleridge, and Leigh Hunt he was an excellent teacher and a man of wide learning and common sense, but much feared on account of his violent temper and severe discipline. See Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, Vol. I, 145, *Table Talk*, p. 85, and Hunt's *Autobiography*, Chap. III, 66.

32 3. *Rev. Matthew Field*. Hunt gives a delightfully humorous sketch of him in his *Autobiography*, III, 65, corroborative of Lamb's opinion.

32 24. "insolent Greece or haughty Rome": from Ben Jonson's *Lines on Shakespeare*.

32 25. *Peter Wilkins*, *The Life and Adventures of (1751)*: a grotesque romance by Robert Paltock of the imaginary island of Graundevole, inhabited by a race of winged people.

32 34. *Rousseau and John Locke*. Lamb refers to their pedagogical theories. They helped to found the modern methods of training children on the principle of following their natural dispositions.

33 10. *Phædrus*: a Roman writer, originally a Macedonian slave, who lived in the first half of the first century A. D.

33 16. a sort of *Helots*: a class of serfs among the ancient Spartans. They did not receive as severe training as their masters, and served only as light-armed troops in time of war.

33 21. with a silence as deep, etc.: Pythagoras, the Samite, founder of a famous mathematical and philosophical school at Crotona in southern Italy in the sixth century B.C. The pupils were banded in a religious fraternity where everything was kept a profound secret from the outer world.

34 3-4. *Ululantes . . . Tartarus*: probably an allusion to Virgil's *Aeneid*, VI, 548 seq.

34 8. *Flaccus's quibble about Rex*. See Horace, *Satires*, I, 7, 35.

34 9. *tristis severitas in vultu*. See Terence, *Andrea*, V, ii, 16.

34 9. *inspicere in patinas*. See Terence, *Adelphi*, III, iii, 74.

35 5. *the Debates*: in Parliament.

35 22-23. *The author of the Country Spectator*. Ainger refers to an amusing account of the origin of this periodical, founded by Bishop Middleton, in Mozley's *Reminiscences of Oriel College*, Vol. III, *Addenda*.

35 30-31. **First Grecian**: the highest class, composed of picked boys who were preparing to enter one of the universities.

35 33. **Dr. T—e**: the Rev. Arthur William Trollope, the successor of Boyle as head master. He retired from the school in 1827 and died soon afterwards.

36 12. **Th—e**: the Right Hon. Sir Edward Thornton, minister to Portugal and to Brazil under Pitt. He was third wrangler at Cambridge in 1789.

36 20. **regni novitas**: See Virgil's *Aeneid*, I, 563.

36 29. **poor S—e**: Scott, died in Bedlam (Lamb's Key).

36 29. **ill-fated M—e**: Maunde, dismissed school (Lamb's Key).

36 30. "Finding some of Edward's race," etc.: quoted incorrectly from Matthew Prior's *Carmen Saculare* for 1700, st. viii, Edward being substituted for Stuart.

37 5. **Mirandula**: Coleridge. Mirandula is a variation of the name of Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), an Italian poet and student of Plato.

37 7. **Jamblichus**: an Alexandrian philosopher of the third century, the founder of the Syrian school of Neo-Platonism.

37 7. **Plotinus** (204-270 A.D.): a Neo-Platonic philosopher of Egypt, who taught in Rome.

37 11. "wit-combats." The quotation which follows is a close paraphrase of Fuller's account in the *English Worthies* of the wit-combats between Shakespeare and Ben Jonson.

37 12. **C. V. Le G—e**: Charles Valentine Le Grice, one of the Grecians at Christ's Hospital, afterwards a clergyman in his native county of Cornwall. He wrote a translation of Longus's pastoral romance *Daphnis and Chloe*. His brother Samuel was one of Lamb's stanchest friends.

37 25. **Nireus formosus**: the son of Chiropus and Aglaia, and the handsomest Greek at the siege of Troy.

37 32. **the junior Le G—e**: Samuel Le Grice, who went into the army and died in the West Indies. He is mentioned in Lamb's letter to Coleridge just after the death of his mother.

37 32. **F—e**: Favell, a Grecian in the school, who was given a commission in the army and was killed in the Peninsula. Lamb wrote opposite the initial in his Key, "Favell left Cambridge because he was ashamed of his father, who was a house-painter there." He is the "poor W—e" of the *Poor Relations*.

38 7. **Fr—e**: Frederick William Franklin.

38 8. **Marmaduke T—e**: Marmaduke Thompson.

Review Questions. 1. Find instances of Lamb's use of the sense of taste. 2. What is Lamb's method of making his style specific? 3. Point out differences in tone and local color between this essay and the preceding. 4. What were the relations of Lamb and Coleridge at school and afterwards? 5. Where does the author show a fondness for mystification? 6. Explain the allusion to Rousseau's and Locke's pedagogical theories. 7. Look up the biblical allusions in the essay. 8. Examine Lamb's use of the parenthesis. 9. Explain the following: *ultima supplicia, ululantes, Tartarus, and the Debates.* 10. Who were Dante, Pindar, Homer, Terence, Cicero, Plato, and Xenophon?

V. THE TWO RACES OF MEN

London Magazine, December, 1820

38 16. "**Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites.**" See *Acts of the Apostles* ii. 9.

38 26. **Alcibiades** (450-404 B.C.): a great Athenian statesman and general. See *Plutarch's Lives*.

38 26. **Falstaff**: a character in Shakespeare's *King Henry IV* and *Merry Wives of Windsor*. He borrows from Mistress Quickly, Pistol, and others. For borrowing scenes, see *1 King Henry IV*, III, ii; and *2 King Henry IV*, I, ii; II, i; and V, iv.

38 26. **Sir Richard Steele** (1672-1729). For exaggerated stories of how Steele borrowed from Addison, see *Macaulay's Essay on Addison*.

38 26-27. **our late incomparable Brinsley**: the brilliant wit and orator, Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816), author of *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal*. Being recklessly improvident, he was frequently in debt, and many stories are told of his boldness and cleverness in borrowing. See his *Life* by Thomas Moore, and Hazlitt's *Lectures on the Comic Writers*.

39 3. **Tooke, Horne**: the assumed name of John Horne (1736-1812), an English politician and philologist, author of *The Pantheon*, etc. He was tried several times for libel and treason, and was at one time a member of Parliament.

39 17. **Candlemas**: February 2, the day of the feast of the purification of the Virgin Mary. In Scotland it is one of the "term days" appointed for payments of money, interest, taxes, etc., and for entry to premises. See Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, Bohn ed.

39 17. **Feast of Holy Michael**: September 29, one of the quarterly terms in England for paying rents, etc. See Chambers's *Book of Days*.

39 18. **lene tormentum**: the mildest torture inflicted by the Inquisition.

39 21. **the true Propontic**: the ancient name of the Sea of Marmora. Locate on the map and explain the comparison.

39 33. **Ralph Bigod, Esq.**: John Fenwick, editor of the *Albion*. Talfourd says that "he edited several ill-fated newspapers in succession, and was author of many libels, which did his employers no good and his Majesty's government no harm"; also that he was one of Lamb's associates who sometimes "left poor Lamb with an aching head and a purse exhausted by the claims of their necessities upon it" (*Letters of Charles Lamb*, Chap. VII).

40 13. "**To slacken virtue**, etc.": in Jesus' reply to Satan, *Paradise Regained*, II, 455.

40 29-30. **with Comus, seemed pleased**, etc. See *Comus*, ll. 152-155.

42 4. **Comberbatch**, more properly Silas Tomkyn Comberback: the assumed name under which Coleridge enlisted in the King's Light Dragoons in 1793. For the incident see Campbell's *Life of Coleridge*, p. 28. Lamb, who was a frequenter of bookshops, accumulated a large library containing many valuable works. Coleridge frequently borrowed from him, and sometimes forgot to return. See "Letter to Coleridge" of June 7, 1809, Talfourd ed., Vol. II, pp. 217-218.

42 9. **like the Guildhall giants**. In the Guildhall, the ancient council hall of London (erected 1411-1431), stand two colossal and fanciful wooden figures called Gog and Magog. They were carved by Saunders in 1708. There is an old prophecy that when they fall, then only shall London fall.

42 11. **Opera Bonaventuræ**: Saint Giovanni di Fidenza Bonaventura (1221-1274), an Italian philosopher and theological writer, surnamed Doctor Seraphicus. He was professor in Paris, general of the Franciscans, and a cardinal.

42 13. **Bellarmino**: Cardinal Roberto Bellarmino (1542-1621), a Jesuit theological controversialist, professor in the Luvain and Roman colleges.

42 13. **Holy Thomas**: Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225?-1274), surnamed Doctor Angelicus, an Italian theologian and scholastic philosopher of the Dominican order, who taught at Paris, Rome, and Bologna. See "Letter to Barton," Talfourd ed., Vol. II, p. 297.

42 14. **Ascapart**: a giant thirty feet high in the old romance *Bevis of Hampton*.

42 24. **Browne on Urn Burial**: Sir Thomas Browne's *Hydriotaphia*, or *Urn-Burial* (1658), "a magnificent descent on the vanity of human life, based on the discovery of certain cinerary urns in Norfolk." See Saintsbury's *History of Elizabethan Literature*, pp. 339, 340.

42 29. **Dodsley's dramas**: Robert Dodsley (1703-1764), an English bookseller and editor of the well-known *Select Collection of Old Plays* (12 vols., 1744), which was used by Lamb in preparing his *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*. See "Letter to Manning," Talfourd ed., Vol. II, p. 230.

42 30. **Vittoria Corombona, or The White Devil**: a tragedy by Webster (1612), one of the noblest and most perfect of the period. See Saintsbury's *History of Elizabethan Literature*, p. 275.

42 32. **Anatomy of Melancholy** (1621): by Robert Burton, "Democritus Junior," "the fantastic great old man," whose humorous and pedantic vein powerfully influenced Lamb's style.

From the olden time
Of authorship, thy patent should be dated,
And thou with Marvell, Browne and Burton mated.

— BERNARD BARTON, *Sonnet*.

See Lamb's "Letter to Manning" of March 17, 1800, in which he speaks of Coleridge having urged him to forge supposed manuscripts of Burton, Talfourd ed., Vol. I, p. 116. *The Anatomy of Melancholy* is the result of many years of study of men and books, and abounds in quotations from authors of all ages and countries. It is divided into three parts treating of the causes and symptoms of melancholy, of its cure, and of erotic and religious melancholy.

42 33. **the Complete Angler**. See note, p. 321. See also "Letters to Coleridge" of October 28, 1796, and "to Miss Fryer" of February 14, 1834.

42 34. **John Bunle**: the title of a book by Thomas Amory (1691?-1788), so called from the name of the hero, who is a "prodigious hand at matrimony, divinity, a song and a peck." Amory was a stanch Unitarian, an earnest moralist, a humorist, and an eccentric,—traits which must have appealed strongly to Lamb.

43 13. **deodands**: the term applied in old English law to personal chattels which had caused the death of a person, and which were forfeited to the crown to be distributed in alms. The law was abolished in 1846.

43 16. **C.**: Coleridge.

43 19. **s spiteful K.**: "James Kenney, the dramatist, chiefly remembered now as the creator of Jeremy Diddler in the well-known farce of *Raising the Wind*" (Kent). He married a French woman and lived for several years in Versailles, where Lamb visited him in 1822.

43 22. **Margaret Newcastle**: Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle (1624-1673), maid of honor to Queen Henrietta Maria, and "distinguished

for her faithful attachment to her lord in his long exile during the time of the Commonwealth and for her indefatigable pursuit of literature" (Chambers).

44 4. **Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke** (1554-1628): author of poems, tragedies, and a *Life of Sidney*, all composed in a severely grave, sententious style. He was stabbed to death by an old servant, who found that he was not mentioned in his master's will.

44 7. **Zimmermann on Solitude**: a book published in 1755 by Johann Georg von Zimmermann (1728-1795), a Swiss physician at the court of Hanover, and author of several medical and philosophical works.

44 10. **S. T. C.**: a third *alias* for Coleridge, to puzzle the reader.

44 16. **Daniel, Samuel** (1562-1619): the author of much poetry and prose, the principal of which are *The History of the Civil Wars*, the *Delia Sonnets*, and *The Complaint of Rosamond*. His best poem is his *Epistle to the Countess of Cumberland*, a favorite with Wordsworth. His command of pure English caused him to be called the "well-languaged Daniel."

Review Questions. 1. Analyze the humor of Lamb's (a) classification of men, (b) biblical allusions, (c) puns, (d) Comberback's sophistry, (e) exaggerations, (f) figures and illustrations, (g) characterization. 2. How has a bookish flavor been imparted to the whole essay? 3. What hint is given of Lamb's favorite authors? 4. Find the secret of the tone of distinction in the style. 5. Note the friendly attitude of Lamb to (a) his readers and (b) his characters.

VI. NEW YEAR'S EVE

London Magazine, January, 1821

This essay has a special interest on account of its tone of melancholy skepticism and its connection with Lamb's controversy with his friend Robert Southey. The views expressed in this essay as also in *Grace before Meat* and *Witches and Other Night Fears* had caused the Laureate to lament, in a review in the *Quarterly*, the "absence of a sounder religious feeling" in Elia's writings. Speculating in his reply on the particular essay which had given color to the charge, Lamb wrote, ". . . Or was it that on the 'New Year'—in which I have described the feelings of the merely natural man, on a consideration of the amazing change, which is supposable to take place on our removal from this fleshly scene?" (Talfourd ed., Vol. I, pp. 338, 339).

"Lamb seems in this essay," says Canon Ainger, "to have written with the express purpose of presenting the reverse side of a passage in his favorite *Religio Medici*. Sir Thomas Browne had there written, 'I thank God I have not those strait ligaments, or narrow obligations to the world, as to dote on life, or be convulsed and tremble at the name of death.' . . . Lamb clung to the things he saw and loved — the friends, the books, the streets, and crowds around him, and he was not ashamed to confess that death meant for him the absence of all these, and that he could not look it steadfastly in the face" (*Life of Lamb*, p. 130).

45 12. "I saw the skirts [train] of the departing Year": from Coleridge's *Ode to the Departing Year* (1790).

45 19. "Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest": from Pope's *Odyssey*, Book XV, l. 84.

46 2. Alice W——n: "Alice Winterton" (Lamb's Key), the fair-haired Hertfordshire girl, and sweetheart of Lamb's boyhood, whose real name was Ann Simmons. The Anna of his sonnets and this Alice, also referred to in *Blakesmoor* and *Dream Children*, were the same person, and it is a tradition of the Widford villagers that Rosamund Gray was drawn from this his first and only love. Ann Simmons married Bartrum, a wealthy pawnbroker of Princes Street, Leicester Square. For the sonnets, see *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb*, pp. 101, 102.

46 24. *changeling*. It was an old superstition that infants were sometimes stolen from their cradles by fairies who left their own weakling elves, called "changelings," in their place. In the Elizabethan writers are numerous references to this belief. In Middleton and Rowley's play *The Changeling* the word means simply "idiot."

46 34. From what have I not fallen, etc. See Lamb's sonnet on *Innocence* (1795): "We were two pretty babes," etc.

48 14. seek Lavinian shores: an adaptation of Virgil's *Aeneid*, I, 2, 3, *Laviniaque venit litora*.

48 30. "Sweet assurance of a look": from Matthew Royden's *Elegy on Sir Philip Sidney*.

49 7-8. Phœbus' sickly sister: the moon. In the Greek myths Apollo, or Phœbus, was the sun god; Diana, Cynthia, or Phœbe, the moon goddess. See Gayley's *Classic Myths*, pp. 59-65.

49 8. *Canticles*: The Song of Solomon viii. 8, 9.

49 9. I hold with the Persian: the Zoroastrian sun worship had its home in Persia.

49 17. Friar John: a tall, lean, wide-mouthed, long-nosed friar of Seville in Rabelais' *Gargantua*. He swore like a trooper and fought furiously with the staff of a cross.

49 25-26. "lie down with kings and emperors in death": a quotation from Browne's *Hydrotaphia, or Urn-Burial*.

50 7. **Mr. Cotton**, Charles (1630-1687): a poet, angler, and friend of Izaak Walton. He is described as "a cheerful, witty and accomplished man." He translated Montaigne's *Essays*.

52 1. **Helicon**: a mountain in Greece, from which flowed the fountains Hippocrene and Aganippe, the fabled resorts of the Muses.

52 1. **Spa**: a general name for European watering places, the oldest being situated in a town of that name in Belgium.

Review Questions. 1. What is the prevailing tone of this essay,—cheerful or gloomy, humorous or melancholy? 2. Where has the author used epigram, contrast, short sentences? 3. What do we learn of his religious views, character as a child, tastes, habits, and views? 4. Note the blending of fact with fiction. 5. Explain the biblical allusions, the reference to the household gods, and use of "reluct" and "burgeon."

VII. MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST

London Magazine, February, 1821

In reprinting this essay in the *London Journal* Leigh Hunt thus introduced it: "Here followeth, gentle reader, the immortal record of Mrs. Battle and her whist; a game which the author, as thou wilt see, wished that he could play forever; and, accordingly, in the deathless pages of his wit, forever will he play it."

Mr. Percy Fitzgerald and Mr. Charles Kent see a resemblance between the character of Mrs. Battle and Lamb's grandmother, Mrs. Mary Field, but Mr. Barry Cornwall and Canon Ainger regard Mrs. Battle as purely the creature of the author's imagination. All the evidence of the essays, as well as Lamb's poem *The Grandame*, supports the latter view.

53 24. **his celebrated game of Ombre.** The description occurs in the third canto of *The Rape of the Lock*. The terms used in the game—spadille, basto, matador, punto, etc.—indicate its Spanish origin.

53 28. **Mr. Bowles**: the Rev. William Lisle Bowles, an English clergyman of antiquarian tastes. His *Sonnets* (1789) greatly influenced Coleridge, and his edition of Pope (1806) caused a controversy between Campbell and Byron. Southeby married his sister Caroline.

54 2. **Spadille**: the ace of spades in the games of ombre and quadrille. See Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, Canto III.

54 7. **Sans Prendre Vole**: a term at cards meaning "without taking the play that wins all the tricks."

54 19. **Machiavel**, Niccolo (1469-1527): a Florentine author and statesman, who was employed in numerous diplomatic missions to the petty states of Italy, to France, and to Germany. In 1513 he was imprisoned and tortured on a charge of conspiring against the Medici. The reference in the text is to his *Florentine History*.

55 19. **among those clear Vandykes**: Sir Anthony Vandyke (1599-1641), a Flemish painter who spent many years in England. He was knighted by Charles I, to whom he was court painter.

55 20. **Paul Potter** (1625-1654): a Dutch painter of portraits and animals.

55 26. **Pam in all his glory!** Pam was the familiar nickname of Henry John Temple Viscount Palmerston (1784-1865). At this time he was Secretary of War, a Tory, a follower of Pitt, and advocate of Catholic emancipation. In 1855 he became prime minister.

56 3-4. **the arrantest Ephesian journeyman**. See *Acts of the Apostles* xix. 24-41.

56 5. **our ancestors' money**. Cf. Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, Book I, Chap. V, p. 35, MacMechan ed.: "A simple invention it was in the old-world grazier,—sick of lugging his slow ox about the country till he got it bartered for corn or oil,—to take a piece of leather, and thereon scratch or stamp the mere figure of an ox (or *pecus*); put it in his pocket, and call it *Pecunia, money*."

56 11. **old Walter Plumer**. See notes on *The South-Sea House*, p. 324.

59 12. **Bridget Elia**: Mary Lamb, sister of the author.

59 34. **Bridget and I should be ever playing**: compare with the thought in this last paragraph the art doctrine of *arrested life* in Keats's *Ode on a Grecian Urn*.

Review Questions. 1. The characterization of Mrs. Battle by means of the game: (a) her strenuous personality; (b) her looks and bearing; (c) her literary tastes; (d) her aggressive, argumentative tone. 2. The philosophy of the game of whist with relation to human nature. 3. Comparison of whist with other games; compare Poe's argument for the superiority of whist over chess in his *Murders in the Rue Morgue*. 4. Explain the references to painting, politics, literature, and the Bible. 5. Find an example of Lamb's religious tolerance. 6. Examine the structure of the essay, especially the parts where the author addresses Mrs. Battle.

VIII. VALENTINE'S DAY

The Indicator, February 14, 1821

This hitherto untraced essay of Elia, the source of which is now for the first time pointed out, appeared originally in No. 71 of Leigh Hunt's *Indicator*, where it may be found at pp. 150-152 of the second volume, signed, according to Lamb's not infrequent custom, with four asterisks. William Hone, in his *Every Day Book*, under date 14th of February, transcribed the whole paper with this prefix: "Attend we upon Elia. Hark, how triumphantly that noble herald of the College of Kindness proclaims the day!" (Kent).

60 1. **old Bishop Valentine**: a Christian martyr of the reign of the Emperor Claudius (about 270 A.D.). The custom of sending love missives on the day of his festival, February 14, originated in connection with the heathen worship of Juno at that time. Its association with the saint is wholly accidental.

60 2. **Arch-flamen of Hymen**: chief priest of the Greek and Roman god of marriage.

60 9-10. **Jerome, Ambrose, Austin, or St. Augustine**: fathers of the Latin church in the 4th century A.D.

60 9-11. **Cyril, Origen**: early fathers of the Greek church.

60 11-12. **Bull, Parker, Whitgift**: prelates of the English church, mentioned because of the ecclesiastical tyranny of a purely personal nature which they exercised.

60 14. "Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings": *Paradise Lost*, I, 768.

61 12-13. "gives a very echo to the throne where hope is seated": a paraphrase from Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, II, iv.

61 17-18. **the raven himself was hoarse**: *Macbeth*, I, v, 39.

61 23. "having been will always be": a free quotation from Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*, st. x, ll. 14-15.

62 5. **E. B.**: Edward Francis Burney (1760-1848), a book illustrator and portrait painter. He was a cousin of the novelist Madame D'Arblay (Miss Burney). He illustrated the novels of Richardson and Smollett, also the *Arabian Nights* and various periodicals.

62 25. **Pyramus and Thisbe**: this famous story of the lovers of Babylon is told in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, IV, 55-166. See also Gayley's *Classic Myths*, § 78, and Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*. It is the subject of burlesque in the subplot of *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

62 25. **Dido**: the story of the unhappy queen of Carthage is found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, XIV, 2, and in Virgil's *Aeneid*, Books I, II,

and III. It was taken as the subject of plays by Gager, Rightwise, and Marlowe.

62 26. **Hero and Leander.** See Musaeus's *De Amore Herois et Leandri* and Ovid's *Heroides*, XVIII, XIX. The story is treated in our literature in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* and in Keats's *On a Picture of Leander*.

62 26. **swans more than sang in Cayster:** the Cayster, or Little Meander, is a swift river of Asia Minor, and according to the poets was much frequented by swans. See Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, II, 253; Martial's *Epigrams*, I, 54; Homer's *Iliad*, II, 461; and Virgil's *Georgics*, V, 384.

62 28. **Iris dipt the woof:** the reference is to the variety of colors used by the artist, Iris being the goddess of the rainbow in Greek mythology.

63 11. "Good-morrow to my Valentine": Lamb had in mind the mad-song of Ophelia in *Hamlet*, IV, v:

To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.

Review Questions. 1. What is the secret of the humor in the second paragraph? 2. By what devices does the author give dignity to the subject? 3. What is the effect of the classical allusions? Explain each. 4. What do the quotations contribute to the tone of the essay? 5. Note easy transition to the fourth paragraph which is a short story. 6. Is this ending a violation of unity in the structure of the essay? 7. Rhetorical classification of "the world meets nobody half way," and "Iris dipt the woof." Find other figures. 8. What do you learn here of Lamb's gifts or limitations as a story-teller?

IX. A QUAKERS' MEETING

London Magazine, April, 1821

Both Leigh Hunt and Thomas Hood were impressed with Lamb's Quakerlike demeanor and plainness of dress. In the summer of 1822 Lamb met Bernard Barton, a Quaker poet, who held a clerkship in a London bank. This meeting resulted in a delightful correspondence which extended from 1822 to 1828. Lamb once said to his friend, "I hope I am half a Quaker myself," and Ainger has especially noted Lamb's strong native sympathy for Quaker customs.

63 16. "Still-born Silence!" etc.: a quotation from Richard Flecknoe's dramatic pastoral, *Love's Dominion* (1634). It is one of the selections in Lamb's *Specimens*.

64 10. **nor pour wax into the little cells of thy ears**: a reference to the story of Ulysses, who stopped up the ears of the crew with wax that they might not hear the song of the Sirens.

64 18-19. "**Boreas, and Cesias, and Argestes loud**": *Paradise Lost*, X, 699.

64 33-34. **The Carthusian is bound**, etc.: a monastic order founded by St. Bruno, who retired in 1086 with six companions to the solitude of La Chartreuse near Grenoble. They wore rude clothing, lived on coarse bread and vegetables, and maintained the rule of unbroken silence, night watching, and frequent prayer.

65 9. **Master Zimmermann**. See note p. 335.

65 19. "**sands, ignoble things**," etc.: from Francis Beaumont's *Lines on the Tombs in Westminster Abbey*. Cf. Addison's *Thoughts in Westminster Abbey*, and Irving's description of the Abbey in *The Sketch Book*.

65 26. "**How reverend is the view**," etc.: a free quotation from Congreve's *Mourning Bride*, II, i.

66 27. **James Naylor** (1618-1660): a Puritan fanatic and Quaker of Yorkshire. Under the delusion that he was the reincarnation of Christ, he entered Bristol, October, 1655, on horseback, naked, in imitation of Christ's entry into Jerusalem. After being convicted of blasphemy by Parliament and tortured, he recanted.

67 6. **John Woolman** (1720-1772): an illiterate tailor of New Jersey. Lamb refers to the *Journal of the Life, Gospel and Labours* of this humble Quaker, of whom Crabb Robinson said, "His religion is love; his whole existence, and all his passions were love."

68 14-15. **the Loves fled the face of Dis**: refers to the rape of Proserpine by Pluto in the Vale of Enna.

68 21. **caverns of Trophonius**: a famous oracle in a cave in Bœotia, from which those who went to consult the god always returned dejected. Hence arose the proverb applied to a melancholy person, "He has been consulting the oracle of Trophonius."

68 30-31. "**forty feeding like one**": from Wordsworth's little extempore poem *The Cock is crowing*, etc., a favorite with Joanna Baillie.

69 3-4. **the Shining Ones**. See *Pilgrim's Progress*, Part I.

Review Questions. 1. What evidence does this essay give of careful preparation of material? 2. Note finished elaboration of the style. Is it painstaking? suggestive? bookish? 3. What appealed to Lamb in the Quaker character? 4. Was he intellectually in sympathy with them? 5. Find echoes from literature sacred and profane.

X. MY RELATIONS

London Magazine, June, 1821

69 16. **I had an aunt.** This was a sister of Lamb's father, who lived in her brother's home and contributed something to the family income. She died in February, 1797. Lamb wrote a poem in her honor.

69 23. **Thomas à Kempis** (1380-1471): a German mystic and ascetic, the reputed author of *De Imitatione Christi*.

69 24-25. **matins and complines**: canonical hours for divine service in the Roman Catholic Church, the latter being observed at midnight and the former shortly after.

70 18. **Brother, or sister, I never had any**: a literary fiction intended to mislead, for Lamb is immediately to describe his brother and sister as cousins.

70 19. **Elizabeth.** Two daughters of John and Elizabeth Lamb were christened by that name, both dying in infancy.

70 24. **James and Bridget Elia**: John and Mary Lamb, brother and sister of the author. John, who was Charles's senior by twelve years, held a clerkship in the South-Sea House, where he occupied bachelor chambers. Mary kept house for Charles.

70 34. **the pen of Yorick**: Yorick is the pen name of Laurence Sterne in his *Sentimental Journey*. It is the name of the eccentric parson in *Tristram Shandy* who claims descent from Shakespeare's Yorick! See *Hamlet*, V.

71 7. **the phlegm of my cousin's doctrine, etc.** In early times the four principal types of temperament, the sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic, and melancholic, were supposed to depend on the preponderance of various humors in the system.

71 24-25. **that piece of tender pastoral Domenichino**: a painting by the Italian artist Domenico Zampieri (1581-1641). Among his works are "Diana and her Nymphs," "Adam and Eve," "St. Jerome," "The Communion of St. Jerome," and "The Martyrdom of St. Agnes."

71 31. **Charles of Sweden**: the celebrated soldier king, Charles XII (1682-1718).

72 4. **the Cham of Tartary**: a powerful Eastern prince frequently referred to by the Elizabethan dramatists as the type of haughty tyranny.

72 15. **John Murray** (1778-1843): a well-known London publisher, founder of the *Quarterly Review*.

73 4. **Chanticleer**: the name of the cock in the old beast epics and *fabliaux*, e.g. Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale*, *Roman du Renard*, and *Reinecke Fuchs*.

73 6. **Eton**: one of the most famous schools in England, situated on the Thames twenty-two miles west of London. It was founded by Henry VI in 1440.

73 18. **Claude Lorrain** (1600-1682): a French landscape painter. See Van Dyke's *History of Painting*, pp. 136, 137.

73 19. **Hobbema** (1638?-1709): a Dutch landscape painter. See Van Dyke's *History of Painting*, p. 216.

73 20. **Christie**, Alexander (1807-1860): a Scottish painter who had a studio in London.

73 20. **Phillips**, Thomas (1770-1845): an English portrait painter, R.A. 1808; professor of painting, R.A. 1824-1832.

73 26. **Westward Ho!** a cry of the watermen on the Thames in old times indicating the direction of their boats. It is the title of a comedy by Webster and Dekker, and of a novel by Charles Kingsley.

73 26. **Pall Mall**: a fashionable promenade in London leading from Trafalgar Square to the Green Park. See Hare's *London*, II, 44.

74 6. "Cynthia of the minute": from Pope's *Epistles*, II, l. 20. Cynthia is the moon goddess.

74 7. **Raphael Sanzio** (1483-1520): the celebrated Italian painter. Among his chief paintings are "The Sistine Madonna," "The Transfiguration," "Marriage of the Virgin," "La Belle Jardinière," "St. George and the Dragon," "St. Michael," "Apollo and Marsyas," "The Vision of Ezekiel," and the Vatican cartoons.

74 11. **the Carracci**: Ludovico (1555-1619), Agostino (1558-1602), and Annibale (1560-1609), three Italian painters of Bologna.

74 13. **Lucca [Luca] Giordano** (1632-1705): a Neapolitan artist.

74 14. **Carlo Maratti** (1625-1713): an Italian painter of Madonnas and other religious work, described as "meretricious."

74 18. "set forth in pomp," etc.: Shakespeare's *Richard II*, V, i, 78-80.

74 20. **Hallowmas**: All Hallows or All Saints' Day, November 1.

75 13-14. **Thomas Clarkson** (1760-1846): an English abolitionist, author of a *History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade*.

76 8. "Through the green plains of pleasant Hertfordshire": from one of Lamb's early sonnets.

Review Questions. 1. Study characterization of the aunt. 2. In the character of the brother note the blending of (a) the man of the world, (b) the sentimental, and (c) the dilettante; also the mingled tone of irony and kindness. 3. What method does Lamb follow: the subjective, objective, psychological, humorous, satiric, burlesque? 4. Is he

frank, or does he keep back his brother's less agreeable traits? 5. In his references to art does Lamb impress you as an amateur or a connoisseur? 6. What is the author's position in regard to cruelty to animals? 7. Find examples of appeal to sense of sight, of hearing, of smell, of taste. 8. This essay may profitably be made the basis of a study of Italian art in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

XI. MACKERY END, IN HERTFORDSHIRE

London Magazine, July, 1821

76 9. **Bridget Elia**: Mary Lamb, who was ten years older than Charles. Mr. Ernest Rhys says, "It is to his sister Mary that Lamb devotes in 'Elia' his most loving grace of description; to his sister, who as Bridget Elia, lives in our hearts and minds forever."

76 15. **the rash king's offspring**. For the story of Jephthah's daughter see Judges xi. 30-40. See also Tennyson's *Dream of Fair Women*, ll. 197-248.

76 16. "with a difference": an heraldic term. See *Hamlet*, IV, v, 182.

76 24. **Burton**. See note on p. 334.

77 9. **the Religio Medici**. See note on p. 336.

77 14. **Margaret Newcastle**. See note, pp. 334-335.

78 12-13. **spacious closet of good old English reading**: the library was that of Samuel Salt. See *The Old Benchers*.

78 24-25. **She is excellent to be at play with**. Charles and Mary usually played piquet together.

79 29. "But thou, that didst appear so fair": from Wordsworth's *Yarrow Visited*.

81 6. **B. F.**: Barron Field (1786-1846), a lawyer who accompanied the Lambs on this visit. He is referred to as "a very dear friend" in *The Old and the New Schoolmaster*, and the *Distant Correspondents* is addressed to him. He usually attended the Wednesday parties. He became Judge of the Supreme Court in Sydney, New South Wales, and Chief Justice at Gibraltar.

Review Questions. 1. Examine the rhetorical effects in the passage beginning "Still the air breathed balmy." Mr. Ainger calls attention to "the almost unique beauty of this prose idyll." 2. Why are there fewer literary allusions in this essay than in previous ones? 3. Can you find the secret of the effects produced in this character sketch of Mary Lamb mentioned by Mr. Rhys? 4. Find touches of the humorous and pathetic. 5. What were the peculiar relations of the author and his sister? 6. Find examples of graceful transition.

XII. IMPERFECT SYMPATHIES

London Magazine, August, 1821

This essay was originally entitled somewhat oddly and clumsily, *Jews, Quakers, Scotchmen and other Imperfect Sympathies*.

82 5. author of the *Religio Medici*: Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682), one of the writers who most influenced Lamb. See Introduction, p. xxix. The passage quoted occurs in Part II, sec. i.

82 6-7. notional and conjectural essences: the beings of fancy and conjecture. Speculating about the world of spirits, in *Religio Medici*, Part I, sec. xxxiii, Browne says, "I could easily believe, that not only whole countries, but particular persons, have their tutelary and guardian angels."

82 14. "Standing on earth, not rapt above the sky [pole]": quoted imperfectly from Milton's invocation of Urania in *Paradise Lost*, VII, 23.

83 (footnote) Heywood. See note to essay on *Elizabethan Dramatists*.

83 8. anti-Caledonian. Caledonia was the old poetic name of Scotland.

84 15-16. His Minerva is born in panoply. In Greek mythology, Pallas Athena, the goddess of wisdom, sprang full-armed from the brain of Zeus.

84 25. true touch. Here "touch" means tried metal of proved quality. Cf. *Coriolanus*, IV, i, "my friends of noble touch." The word is also used of (1) a stone to test the quality of metals, and (2) the trial itself.

85 12. John Buncle. See note on p. 334.

85 19. Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519); a great Italian painter, architect, sculptor, musician, and scientist. The "print of a graceful female" was from his famous *Vierge aux Rochers*, or "Virgin of the Rocks," of which there are replicas in the Louvre at Paris and in the National Gallery in London.

86 1. Burns, Robert (1759-1796): the celebrated lyric poet of Scotland.

86 18. Thomson, James (1700-1748). The author of *The Seasons* and *The Castle of Indolence*, though a Scotchman, does not use the Scotch dialect in his poems.

86 19. Smollett, Tobias (1721-1771): a Scotch novelist born near Dumbarton, and author of *Roderick Random* and *Humphrey Clinker*, which is told in a series of letters, and is by many critics considered his best. He also wrote a *History of England*, an independent work,

which has been frequently printed as a continuation of Hume's *History*, which closes at the Revolution.

86 20. **Rory and his companion**: Roderick Random and his school-fellow, the barber, Hugh Strap, who are outrageously gulled on their arrival in London.

86 26. **Stonehenge**: the remnant of a prehistoric Celtic monument of a religious nature, which stands in Salisbury Plain, in Wiltshire. Seventeen great stones, connected in part by slabs resting on their tops, inclose an ellipse, in the middle of which is a slab called the altar. See Rhys's *Celtic Heathendom*, pp. 194, 195.

87 1. **They date beyond the pyramids**. Lamb had in mind the pyramids of Gizeh, the northernmost surviving group of a range of about seventy pyramids extending from Aba Roâsh south to Meidoun. The group dates from about 4000 B.C. De Quincey makes similar use of the pyramids to connote great age in his *Confessions* and *Daughter of Lebanon*.

87 5. **the story of Hugh of Lincoln**. The legend of the torture and murder of this little Christian boy by the Jews of Lincoln in 1255 is told by Matthew Paris, and is the subject of several old ballads in Percy's *Reliques*, the *Golden Treasury Ballad Book*, and Child's *Ballads*. See also Chaucer's *Prioress's Tale*.

87 27. **B**—: John Braham (1774–1856): the most popular tenor singer of his day in London; author of *The Death of Nelson* and other songs. "That glorious singer," wrote Lamb to Manning on January 2, 1810, "Braham, one of my lights, is fled. He was for a season. He was a rare composition of the Jew, the gentleman and the angel, yet all these elements mixed up so kindly in him, that you could not tell which preponderated; but he is gone, and one Phillips is engaged instead" (*Letters of Charles Lamb*, p. 241).

87 32. **the Shibboleth**: a secret password. For its origin see Judges xii. 1–6.

88 4. **Kemble**, John Philip (1757–1823): the great tragic actor, who succeeded Garrick as the foremost interpreter of Shakespeare's heroes. "He was a stately actor, with a somewhat stilted and declamatory style." The still more celebrated Sarah Siddons was his sister, and Charles Kemble, the father of Fanny Kemble, his brother, who was a frequent guest at Lamb's parties.

88 12. **Jael**. She slew Sisera in her tent by smiting a nail into his temples. See Judges iv. 18–22.

88 17. **Fuller**, Thomas (1608–1661): the author of two well-known books, *The Worthies of England* and *The Holy and the Profane State*.

His style, which greatly influenced Lamb, is full of solemn, fantastic quips and quaint conceits.

88 21. **Quaker ways.** "Do 'Friends' allow puns," — wrote Lamb to his Quaker friend, Bernard Barton, — "*verbal* equivocations? They are unjustly accused of it, and I did my best in the *Imperfect Sympathies* to vindicate them."

88 27. **Desdemona:** the young and beautiful heroine of Shakespeare's tragedy of *Othello*. "To live with him" is a phrase in I, iii, 249.

88 32-33. **the salads which Eve dressed for the angel.** See *Paradise Lost*, V, 315-450.

88 33. **Evelyn**, John, D.C.L. (1620-1706): an English author, who wrote much on the Arundel marbles, Greenwich Hospital, gardening, numismatics, etc. He was a Royalist during the Civil War and became secretary of the Royal Society. Lamb's reference is to a passage in his *Complete Gardener*.

88 34. "To sit a guest with Daniel at his pulse": a free paraphrase from *Paradise Regained*, II, 278.

90 11. **Penn**, William (1644-1718): the founder of Pennsylvania, and author of *No Cross No Crown*, a book which Lamb liked immensely, pronouncing it "a most capital book, good thoughts in good language."

90 15. **I was travelling in a stage-coach, etc.** This anecdote called forth a remonstrance from Barton's sister, to whom Lamb replied in a letter of March 11, 1823, explaining that the adventure had not happened to him but had been related to him by the eminent surgeon, Sir Anthony Carlyle, who was an eyewitness of the incident.

90 34. **The steps went up.** Coaches and private carriages were formerly provided with folding steps.

Review Questions. 1. Note the perfect construction of this essay. 2. Study the satire and humor in the paragraph on the Scotch. 3. Explain and comment on the figure employed in "His Minerva is born in panoply." 4. Is there any animosity in Lamb's criticism of Scotch character? 5. Note with what critical insight and delicacy Lamb suggests Smollett's superiority to Hume. 6. What accounts for the author's admiration for Burns and Thomson? 7. Note the ingenuity and subtle suggestiveness of the close of the paragraph on Jews. 8. Analyze effects, plan, climax, character sketching, etc., in the short story at the close of the essay.

XIII. THE OLD BENCHERS OF THE INNER TEMPLE

London Magazine, September, 1821

"The essay on *The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple* is one of the most varied and beautiful pieces of prose that English literature can boast. Eminently, moreover, does it show us Lamb as the product of two different ages,—the child of the Renaissance of the sixteenth century and of that of the nineteenth. It is as if both Spenser and Wordsworth had laid hands of blessing upon his head" (Ainger).

91 14. **the Temple**: in the Middle Ages a lodge of the Knights Templars of the Holy Sepulcher, which was a military and religious order. A later building of the order, dating from 1184, is the Temple in the Strand. The Templars were suppressed in the reign of Edward II, and the house, after passing through various hands, reverted to the crown. In 1338 it went to the Knights Hospitalers of St. John, who leased it to students of the common law. On the same site now stand the two Inns of Court, called the Inner and Middle Temples, owned by a legal society which grants admission to the bar. The Outer Temple was converted into the Exeter Buildings.

91 21. "There when they came," etc.: from Spenser's *Prothalamium*, st. viii.

92 5. "Of building strong," etc.: an improvised line referring to the "Paper Buildings" facing King's Bench Walk in the Temple.

92 11. **Twickenham Naiades**. Twickenham, a town where Pope lived and had a grotto, was higher up the river above the "trade-polluted waters," and therefore where, to the imagination, river nymphs would prefer to dwell.

92 13. **that fine Elizabethan hall**: the hall of the Middle Temple.

92 25. "Ah! yet doth beauty like a dial-hand," etc.: from Shakespeare's *Sonnet*, civ.

93 4. **the horologe of the first world**. The ancient horologe, or sun dial, was an instrument for showing the time of day from the shadow of a style or gnomon, which was parallel with the earth's axis, on a graduated arc or surface called the dial plate. There were also astral and lunar dials. Mr. Richard Le Gallienne, in his *Old Country House*, quotes from this essay and speaks of the dial as "the natural clock by which to do the beautiful work of idleness."

93 8-9. "carved it out quaintly in the sun." See *3 Henry VI*, II, v, 24.

93 12. **Marvell, Andrew** (1621-1678): joint secretary with Milton under Cromwell, and the last of the lyric poets of the romantic age.

For the influence of his lovely garden poems on Lamb, see Ainger's *Life*, p. 108.

93 17. "What wonderous life is this I lead!" from Marvell's *The Garden*. The entire poem is number 111 in the *Golden Treasury of English Lyrics*.

94 20. **Lincoln's Inn**: one of the Inns of Court, occupied by legal societies which provide instruction and examinations for candidates to the bar. See Hare's *London*, Vol. I, p. 59.

95 12. **The old benchers**: the legal term applied to the senior and governing members of the Inns of Court.

95 17. **The roguish eye of J**—ll. Jekyll, the famous wit among the benchers, was the master in chancery; called to the bench in 1805, died in 1837.

95 19. **Thomas Coventry**: called to the bench in 1766, died in 1797.

95 26. **an Elisha bear**. See 2 Kings ii. 23, 24.

96 2. **Samuel Salt**. See note on p. 329.

96 14. **his man Lovel**: the author's father, John Lamb, Sr., who died 1797. The name Lovel occurs in Murphy's *The Citizen* (1757), Bayley's *The Mistletoe Bough*, Clara Reeve's *Old English Baron* (1777), and Townley's *High Life Below Stairs* (1759), from any one of which Lamb may have taken it. There is also a Lovell mentioned in *Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago*, whose name may have suggested the pseudonym of his father.

96 27. **the unfortunate Miss Blandy**: the principal in a celebrated trial for murder in 1752. Her father, a Henley attorney, refused to allow her to receive the attentions of Captain Cranstoun, an adventurer. Mr. Blandy died from the effects of a powder given him by his daughter, who claimed that it was a love philter to change his feelings toward her lover. She was convicted and executed at Oxford in April, 1752. See Leslie's *Our River*.

97 15-16. **Not so, thought Susan P**—: Susannah Pierson, sister of the bencher mentioned below. As a mark of his regard Salt bequeathed her the works of Pope, Swift, Shakespeare, Addison, and Steele.

98 9-10. **the mad Elwes breed**: John Elwes (1714-1789), a noted miser, the son of a wealthy English brewer. He had a morbid disinclination to spend money upon himself, but was extravagant in gaming and speculation.

98 28. **his "flapper"**: in Swift's *Voyage to Laputa*, a family officer, whose business it was "gently to strike with his bladder the mouth of him who is to speak, and the right ear of him or them to whom the speaker addresseth himself."

99 13. **a face as gay as Garrick's**: David Garrick (1717-1779), the famous English actor and manager of Drury Lane Theater, where he brought out twenty-four of Shakespeare's plays, besides many modern comedies. Dr. Johnson said that "his death eclipsed the gaiety of nations." A portrait of John Lamb in Procter's *Memoir of Charles Lamb* shows some resemblance to Garrick.

99 15-16. **next to Swift and Prior**. For a discussion of Swift's verse see Gosse's *Literature of the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 152-153; and for that of Prior, Austin Dobson's essay in Ward's *English Poets*, Vol. III, pp. 18, 19.

99 16. **moulded heads**. Canon Ainger mentions a medallion portrait of Salt done by John Lamb in plaster of Paris, and now in the possession of Mrs. Arthur Tween, a daughter of Randall Norris.

99 27. "**a remnant [semblance] most forlorn of what he was**": a free quotation from Lamb's own lines "written on the day of my aunt's funeral" (1797).

99 29. **He was greatest . . . in Bayes**: a coxcomb in Buckingham's farce, *The Rehearsal*, intended as a caricature of the poet laureate, Dryden. The character was originally called Bilboa in ridicule of Sir Robert Howard, but was changed when Howard became a friend of the author. Dryden in turn satirized Buckingham as Zimri in *Absalom and Achitophel*.

100 9. **Peter Pierson**: called to the bench in 1800 and died in 1808. Though friends at the bar, he and Salt were not contemporaries on the bench.

100 17-18. **resembling that of our great philanthropist**. Probably John Howard is meant.

100 20. **Daines Barrington** (1722-1800): the son of Viscount Barrington. He was called to the bench in 1777. He was an enthusiastic naturalist and antiquarian, and wrote *The Naturalist's Calendar* and *Observations on the Statutes*.

100 29. **Barton, Thomas**: called to the bench in 1775, died 1791.

100 34. **Read, John**: called to the bench in 1792, died 1794.

101 1. **Twopeny, Richard** (1728-1809). He was a stockbroker to the Bank of England, and occupied bachelor chambers in the Temple, but was never a bencher, as Lamb supposed.

101 2. **Wharry, John**: called to the bench in 1801, died in 1810.

101 16. **Jackson, Richard**. On account of his learning and memory he was given the sobriquet of the Omniscient. See Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, April, 1776. He went on the bench in 1770, became a member of Parliament and a minister of the crown in 1782. He died in 1787.

101 19. **Friar Bacon**: Roger Bacon (1214?-1294), a learned English philosopher and scientist, author of *Opus Majus* (1265), a scientific treatise written on request of Pope Clement IV. In Greene's play *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* he is a great magician possessing supernatural knowledge and power. See Schneider's *Roger Bacon* (1873).

101 29. **Mingay with the iron hand**: James Mingay, an eminent king's counsel, noted for his "oratory of infinite wit and most excellent fancy." He went on the bench in 1785 and died in 1812. He was a rival of Erskine.

102 3. **Michael Angelo's Moses**: a gigantic and imposing statue in the church of San Pietro in Vincoli, in Rome. His right hand upholds the tables of the law and clutches the long beard, and the hair is arranged in such a way as to give a suggestion of horns.

102 4. **Baron Maseres** (1731-1824) filled for fifty years the post of Cursitor Baron of the Exchequer. He continued throughout life to wear the costume of the reign in which he was born.

102 13. **I saw Gods, as "old men," etc.** See 1 Samuel xxviii. 13, 14. Cf. Lamb's mention of the picture of the Witch of Endor in *Witches and Other Night-Fears*.

102 28. **R. N.**: Randall Norris (1751-1827), for many years librarian and subtreasurer of the Inner Temple, where he resided for over fifty years. Lamb wrote of him, "He was my friend and my father's friend all the life I can remember. Old as I am waxing, in his eyes I was still the child he first knew me. To the last he called me Charley. I have none to call me Charley now."

103 14. **Urban**: the pseudonym of the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine* (founded 1731).

103 20-21. **"ye yourselves are old"**: *Lear*, II, vii, 194.

103 22. **future Hookers and Seldens**. Richard Hooker (1553-1600), the author of *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, was a Master of the Temple, and John Selden (1584-1654), the jurist, antiquary, and orientalist, had quarters in the Inner Temple

Review Questions. 1. What were Lamb's special gifts for writing biographical sketches? 2. In which of the benchers does the author show peculiar interest? 3. Note the tender humor of his portraiture of his father, and contrast with that of his brother John. 4. Lamb has been called "the last of the Elizabethans"; find grounds for this statement in this essay. 5. Compare characterization of Coventry with Irving's Wooten van Twiller. 6. Examine Lamb's use of Italianized, frescoes, quadrate, coeval, spinous, cue, windfall, moidore, hunks, female, quips, and younkers. What can be said of the author's vocabulary?

XIV. WITCHES AND OTHER NIGHT-FEARS

London Magazine, October, 1821

This essay was the unfortunate cause of the controversy between Lamb and his old friend Southey. In an article entitled *Progress of Infidelity*, attacking Leigh Hunt and Hazlitt in the *Quarterly Review* for July, 1823, Southey spoke of unbelievers not always being honest enough to express their real feelings, and charged them with the inability to divest themselves of fear even when they had renounced hope. "There is a remarkable proof of this in *Elia's Essays*," he wrote, "a book which wants only a sounder religious feeling to be as delightful as it is original. In that upon *Witches and Other Night-Fears* he says, 'It is not book or picture, or the stories of foolish servants which create these terrors in children.'" Southey then quoted the passage about little Thornton Hunt, and used it as a text for criticising severely the irreligious training of Leigh Hunt's children. Talfourd explains that Southey intended by this reference to increase the sale of Lamb's book. Lamb felt this slur so deeply that he wrote to Barton on July 10, "Southey has attacked Elia on the score of infidelity. . . . He might have spared an old friend such a construction of a few careless flights, that meant no harm to religion." In the *London* for October Lamb published a long open letter to Southey in which he expostulated with him for doing him an unfriendly office, and defended himself and Hunt vigorously. Southey read the article with surprise and grief. Lamb soon recovered from his resentment, apologized to his friend, received a visit from him, and re-established their friendship.

104 11. **maidens pined away.** A common charge against witches was that of causing their victims to waste away by making waxen images of them and applying tortures to these. See Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584, recently edited by Dr. Nicholson), XII, 16; also Bullen's edition of Middleton's *Witch*, a play with which Lamb was familiar. This superstition is the motive of Rossetti's ballad *Sister Helen*.

104 23. **symbolized by a goat.** See Matthew xxv. 33.

105 9. **Prospero:** a wise and good magician in *The Tempest*. See I, ii, for the reference.

105 15. **Guyon, Sir:** the knight of temperance in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. See the account of the siege of the House of Temperance, Book II, Canto xi.

105 29. **Witch raising up Samuel.** See 1 Samuel xxviii.

106 14. **Saint George**: the patron saint of England, the same as the Red Cross Knight in Book I of the *Faerie Queene*. The exploit referred to was slaying the monster Error. See Book I, Canto i, 20-26.

108 8. "Headless bear, blackman, or ape": from Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. III.

108 12. **Dear little T. H.**: Leigh Hunt's oldest son, Thornton.

108 17-18. "thick-coming fancies": from *Macbeth*, V, iii, 38.

108 22-23. **Gorgons**: Medusa, Stheno, and Euryale, three sisters with wings, brazen claws, enormous teeth, scaly bodies, and hair entwined with serpents. Whoever looked upon them was turned to stone. **Hydras**: the mythological hydra slain by Hercules was a many-headed water serpent which inhabited the marshes of Lerna in Argolis. **Chimæras**: the chimera of mythology was a strange, fire-breathing monster of Lycia, killed by Bellerophon. **the Harpies**: Celæno, Aëllo, and Ocypete, the daughters of Neptune and Terra. They are represented as disgusting winged monsters, of fierce aspect, with the bodies of vultures, the heads of maidens, and hands armed with claws. They were ministers of the vengeance of the gods.

108 28. "Names, whose sense we see not," etc.: from Spenser's *Epithalamium*, ll. 343, 344.

109 6. "Like one that on a lonesome road," etc.: from Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*, ll. 446-451.

110 5. **Helvellyn**: the second peak in height (3118 feet) in the lake district in Cumberland.

110 10. "Where Alph, the sacred river, runs [ran]," etc.: from Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*, l. 3.

110 12. **Barry Cornwall**. See note on p. 320.

110 24. **Ino Leucothea**: the wife of Athamas, king of Thebes. To escape from her mad husband she threw herself into the sea and was changed into a sea goddess.

Review Questions. 1. Examine the fine topic sentence in paragraph 2. 2. Show the perfect keeping between Lamb's subject and his treatment of it. How does he get his weird effects? 3. Find an echo of the leading thought in Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*. 4. Compare with Lamb's "night fancies" De Quincey's architectural dreams. See my edition of the *Confessions*, pp. 129-135. 5. Is there evidence of the influence of the style of the Bible? of Milton?

XV. GRACE BEFORE MEAT

London Magazine, November, 1821

In Lamb's reply to Southey in the *London* for October, 1823, regarding the laureate's attack on the *Essays of Elia*, he said: "Perhaps the paper on *Saying Graces* was the obnoxious feature. I have endeavored there to rescue a voluntary duty — good in place, but never, as I remember, literally commanded — from the charge of an undecent formality. Rightly taken, sir, that paper was not against graces, but want of grace; not against ceremony, but the carelessness and slovenliness so often observed in the performance of it."

111 29. **the Faërie Queene**: the great allegorical and romantic poem by Edmund Spenser (1552?–1599).

112 5–6. **Utopian**: a word derived from Sir Thomas More's political romance *Utopia*, i.e. Nowhere (1516), which gives an account of an imaginary island, the seat of an ideal commonwealth. It means therefore "impracticable," "visionary."

112 5–6. **Rabelæsian**: an epithet derived from the name of François Rabelais (1495?–1553), whose books were noted for their buffoonery, riotous license, and their biting satire on the religious corruptions of the time.

113 26. **still small voice**. See 1 Kings xix. 12.

113 29. **Jeshurun waxed fat**. See Deuteronomy xxxii. 15.

113 31. **Celæno**. See Virgil's *Aeneid*, III, 245–257, and note p. 353.

114 15. "**A table richly spread in regal mode**," etc.: from *Paradise Regained*, II, 340–347.

114 28. **Heliogabalus**: a Roman emperor (204–222 A.D.) notorious for his gluttony and debauchery.

115 3. "**As appetite is wont to dream**," etc.: from *Paradise Regained*, II, 264–278.

116 15. **C**—: Coleridge.

116 26. **The author of the Rambler**. Dr. Samuel Johnson published the *Rambler*, a periodical after the plan of the *Spectator*, in London, 1750–1752. For a graphic account of Dr. Johnson's gormandizing, read Macaulay's *Essay on Johnson*.

117 3. **Dagon**: the national god of the Philistines, half man and half fish. The word is derived from the Hebrew *dag*, a fish. See Judges xvi. 23, and 1 Samuel v.

117 6. **the Chartreuse**: the leading Carthusian monastery near Grenoble.

118 5. **Lucian**: a Greek satirist and humorist, called the Blasphemer" on account of his attacks on the religious beliefs of his time.

118 14-15. **that equivocal wag**, C. V. L.: Charles Valentine Le Grice. See note on p. 331.

118 26. **some one recalled a legend**. The story is told by Leigh Hunt in his account of the Blue-Coat School. See note on p. 329.

Review Questions. 1. Find examples of Lamb's appeal to the sense of taste for literary effects. Cf. Milton's and Keats's similar use. 2. Note the fine epigrammatic sentence in the eighth paragraph. 3. Study the author's use of the short sentence in the tenth paragraph. 4. Pick out the topic sentence in each paragraph and note position. 5. Analyze the humor of Coleridge's axiom about apple dumplings, and Le Grice's anteprandial witticism. 6. Explain the biblical and other literary allusions. 7. Explain the following: "those Virgilian fowl," orgasm, windfall, epicurism, culinary, tucker, and flamens.

XVI. DREAM-CHILDREN: A REVERIE

London Magazine, January, 1822

This paper was written by Lamb a short while after the death of his brother John. The bereavement brought home to him a depressing sense of his loneliness, for his sole surviving near relative was now his sister, whose sad affliction deprived him of her companionship for months at a time. In the delicate and pathetic confidence of this essay he reveals to us the genuine emotions of a heart deprived of the happiness of wedded life. As a protection from the curious, he, as is his custom, blends fact with fiction.

119 6. **who lived in a great house in Norfolk**. This house was not really situated in Norfolk, but in Hertfordshire, as is afterwards stated correctly in the essay on *Blakesmoor* (Blakesware).

119 10-11. **the Children in the Wood**. The ballad is given in Bishop Percy's *Reliques*, and in Child's *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*. It is the story of the little son and daughter of a Norfolk gentleman, who were left with a considerable fortune in the care of an uncle. He, in order to secure the property, hired two ruffians to murder the children. But one of them relented and killed his companion. The little ones were, however, left in the Wayland Wood, where they perished at night of cold and terror. In time the ruffian confessed, and the unnatural

uncle died in prison. The tale is the subject of Thomas Taylor's play *The Babes in the Wood*.

119 26-27. which afterwards came to decay. Cussans says in his *History of Hertfordshire* that the Blakesware house was pulled down in 1822. The "other house" was Gilston, the principal seat of the Plumers, some miles distant.

120 7. *Psaltory*: the version of the Psalms in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

120 28-29. busts of the twelve Cæsars. "I could tell you," wrote Lamb to Southe, "of an old house with a tapestry bed-room, the 'Judgment of Solomon' composing one panel, and 'Actæon spying Diana naked' the other. I could tell of an old marble hall, with Hogarth's prints, and the Roman Cæsars in marble hung around" (Lamb's *Letters*, XLV).

121 24-25. their uncle, John L——: John Lamb, the author's brother.

122 25. the fair Alice W——n. See note, p. 336.

Review Questions. 1. Note the beautiful simplicity and tenderness of the style, which is admirably adapted to the tone of the essay. 2. How are the characters of the children suggested? 3. Note how delicately the character of the mother is depicted by reflection in that of the imaginary Alice. 4. Is the characterization of Mrs. Field distinct? 5. Compare what is here said of John with that in the former essay, noticing differences in tone. 6. Note the classic notion of incarnation at the close of the essay. 7. What gives unity to the two long sentences beginning, "Then I told how good," etc., and "Then in somewhat a more heightened tone," etc.? 8. Observe the undernote of pathos running throughout the essay. 9. Do you find any humor?

XVII. ON SOME OF THE OLD ACTORS

London Magazine, February, 1822

This was one of three essays originally published in the *London* under the general title of *The Old Actors*. In the volume of 1823 they were abridged and arranged under the title of *On Some of the Old Actors, On the Artificial Comedy of the Last Century, and On the Acting of Munden*.

123 25. **Mr. Barrymore**: Spranger Barry (1719-1777), an Irish actor, the rival of Garrick. He excelled in tragedy.

123 28. **Mrs. Jordan**: the stage name of Dorothy Bland (1762-1816), an Irish actress, whom Genest declares never to have had a superior

in comedy. She was especially admired in the rôle of Hypolita in Wycherly's *Gentleman Dancing-Master*.

124 2-3. **her Nells and Hoydens.** Nell is the meek and obedient wife of Jobson in C. Coffey's play *The Devil to Pay* (1731); Hoyden is a romping, country girl in Vanbrugh's play *The Relapse* (1697), modernized by Sheridan in *A Trip to Scarborough* (1777).

124 7. **story of her love for Orsino.** See *Twelfth Night*, II, iv, 110.

124 19. **"Write loyal cantons of contemned love," etc.** : *Twelfth Night*, I, v, 291.

125 8. **Bensley, Robert** (1738-1817). He retired from the stage in 1796.

125 13-14. **Hotspur's famous rant about glory.** See *1 Henry IV*, I, iii, 200 *seq.*

125 (footnote). **Venice Preserved** : a tragedy by Thomas Otway (1651-1685), "the principal tragic poet of the English classical school." He fell in love with Mrs. Barry, who acted in his plays, and who proved his evil genius. He died in a baker's shop near a sponging house in which he was living in abject poverty. Pierre is a conspirator in *Venice Preserved*. See II, iii, p. 318, Mermaid ed.

126 24-25. **John Kemble.** See note on p. 346.

126 31. **Lambert, John** (1619-1683) : an English general distinguished on the Parliamentary side in the Civil War, and a member of Cromwell's Council of State.

126 31-32. **Lady Fairfax** : the wife of the fifth Lord Fairfax, a Parliamentary general in the Civil War.

128 23. **Duchess of Malfy [Malfi]** : a tragedy by John Webster (printed in 1623). See Mermaid ed.

129 33. **the hero of La Mancha** : Don Quixote de la Mancha, a Spanish country gentleman in Cervantes' romance of that name.

130 15. **to mate Hyperion** : the son of Cælum and Tellus, the ancient god of the sun, overthrown by Apollo. Keats wrote a fragmentary epic on the theme.

130 22. **"thus the whirligig of time," etc.** : *Twelfth Night*, V, i, 385.

130 26. **Dodd, James William** (1740?-1796) : an actor in Garrick's company who was very successful in the parts of Sir Andrew Ague-cheek and Abel Drugger. He died in the autumn of 1796 soon after retiring from his profession.

132 3-6. **so formally flat in Foppington, etc.** Lord Foppington is an empty-headed coxcomb, intent only on dress and fashion, in Van Brugh's comedy *The Relapse* (1697), and in Sheridan's adaptation. Tattle, a character in Congreve's *Love for Love* (1695), "a mixture of lying,

foppery, vanity, cowardice, bragging, licentiousness, and ugliness, but a professed beau"; **Backbite**, Sir Benjamin, a conceited, censorious character in Sheridan's comedy *The School for Scandal* (1777); **Acres**, Bob, a country gentleman in Sheridan's comedy *The Rivals* (1775), who tries to ape a man of fashion, and, though a coward, is a great blusterer; **Fribble**, a contemptible mollycoddle in Garrick's *Miss in Her Teens* (1753).

132 31. "put on the weeds of Dominic." The uniform of the Dominican friars was a white robe with a black cloak and pointed cap.

133 3-4. **Richard Suet**: died 1805.

133 14. like Sir John, "with hallooing and singing of anthems": said of Sir John Falstaff in *a Henry IV*, I, ii, 213.

133 17. "commerce with the skies": a paraphrase of Milton's *Il Penseroso*, l. 39, "and looks commercing with the skies."

134 3. **Parsons**: died 1795.

134 7. **Robin Good-Fellow**: the son of King Oberon, but also the generic name for any domestic spirit, elve, imp, or fay with the power to turn himself into any shape so long as he did harm to none but knaves and queans. See Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 47, and *The Mad Pranks and Merry Jests of Robin Goodfellow* (1580), republished by the Percy Society, 1841.

134 9. **Puck**, or Hobgoblin, same as Robin Goodfellow: a gossamer-winged, dainty-limbed, fawn-faced, mischievous little urchin in *Midsummer Night's Dream*. See also Drayton's *Nymphidia* (1627).

134 16. The "force of nature could no farther go": from Dryden's poem on Milton, "Three poets in three distant ages born," etc.

135 1. **Jack Bannister** (1760-1836): a noted English comedian, the son of Charles Bannister, an actor and bass singer. *The Children in the Wood* is a comedy by Morton (1815).

135 9. **He put us into Vesta's days**. In the most primitive times Vesta was, according to some mythologists, the mother of the gods.

135 23. **In sock or buskin**: in comedy or tragedy. The terms are derived from the costumes of comic and tragic actors in classical times.

135 24. **Palmer**, John (1747-1798): retired from the stage in 1798. He excelled in the rôle of Joseph Surface.

135 31. **Bobby in the Duke's Servant**: a character in Townley's farce, *High Life Below Stairs* (1759).

135 33. **Captain Absolute**: a character in Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775), in love with Lydia Languish, to whom he is known only as Ensign Beverley.

136 3. **Dick Amlet**: a gamester in Vanbrugh's comedy, *The Confederacy* (1695).

136 8-9. **The lies of young Wilding**. Jack Wilding is a young gentleman from Oxford in S. Foote's farce, *The Liar* (1761), who fabricates the most ridiculous falsehoods, which he passes off for facts.

136 9. **Joseph Surface**: a character in Sheridan's *School for Scandal* (1777), whose good is all on the surface, but who is in reality an artful, malicious, and sentimental knave.

136 20. **Ben Legend**: in Congreve's *Love for Love* (1695); younger son of Sir Sampson Legend, a sailor and sea wit, with none of the traditional generosity and frankness of the British tar. Dibdin says that Thomas Doggett was the best actor of the part.

137 13-14. **a Wapping sailor**. Wapping is a quarter of London lying along the north bank of the Thames below the Tower.

Review Questions. 1. The student should read *Twelfth Night* in order to understand this essay properly. 2. Examine with special care what Lamb says about Malvolio. It is a noble specimen of Shakespearean criticism. 3. Analyze also the characters and acting of Dodd, Suett, and Palmer, with reference to the parts taken. 4. Note how skillfully Lamb merges the personality of the actor in the character taken by him. 5. Give the main points made by Lamb in his criticism of the artificial comedy of the eighteenth century. 6. Read the criticisms on Congreve and Sheridan in any good history of English literature, and compare their comedy with Shakespeare's.

XVIII. THE PRAISE OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS

London Magazine, May, 1822

A May-Day Effusion was originally attached as a subtitle to this paper. The essay shows with what a keenly observant eye Lamb walked the streets of London. Procter speaks of him as "looking no one in the face for more than a moment, yet contriving to see everything as he went on."

The custom of employing boys to sweep chimneys was not abolished until 1840, after a long agitation by Parliament (see McCarthy's *History of England in the Nineteenth Century*, Vol. I, pp. 267-273). The adult master sweepers hired little boys to do the climbing. The system led to much abuse and even criminal cruelty. The limbs of the sweepers were severely abraised by the friction necessary to force

their way up the rough masonry. Sometimes the boys would stick fast in the narrow openings and would have to be dragged back bruised and otherwise injured; often they were burned by having to ascend chimneys which had not sufficiently cooled. In several instances master sweeps were convicted of abducting boys and employing little girls for this work.

138 1. **the peep peep of a young sparrow.** "The boy had to climb from the fireplace to the top of the chimney and to announce the accomplishment of his mission by crying out 'Sweep!' when his soot-covered head and face emerged from the chimney-top" (McCarthy's *Nineteenth Century*, Vol. I, p. 269). This precaution was taken to prevent incomplete work.

138 24-25. **the old stage direction in Macbeth.** See IV, i.

139 8. **the only Salopian house:** Mr. Read's shop. "Saloop" was an aromatic drink, prepared from sassafras bark and other ingredients, at one time much used in London.

141 12. **Hogarth.** See note to essay *On the Genius and Character of Hogarth.*

141 30-31. "**A sable cloud turns forth,**" etc.: *Comus*, l. 223. Note the halo cast over the subject by poetic association in which enjoyment of the wit is mingled with admiration of its beauty.

142 14. **Arundel Castle:** a noble mansion on the Strand in London, in the gardens of which were originally placed the famous Arundelian marbles.

142 20. **Venus lulled Ascanius.** See Virgil's *Aeneid*, I, 643-722. When the goddess plotted to make Dido fall in love with Aeneas, Cupid went to Dido in the guise of Ascanius, while the latter remained with Venus.

143 18. **Jem White:** James White, a schoolmate of Lamb's at Christ's Hospital, and for years afterwards "the companion of his lighter moods." In 1795 he published the supposititious *Original Letters of Sir John Falstaff*, a book full of quaint old-fashioned humor that pleased Lamb greatly. He died in 1820.

143 24. **the fair of St. Bartholomew.** This great national fair with its variety of shows was held at Smithfield, London, from 1133 till 1840, and became an occasion of popular amusement and unbridled license. See Ben Jonson's comedy, *Bartholomew Fair* (1614), and Morley's *Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair* (1857).

144 10. **our trusty companion Bigod.** See note on p. 333.

144 13. **Rochester in his maddest days:** John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647-1680), a poet of the court of Charles II. He erected

a stage on Tower Hill and played the mountebank, was in a state of inebriety for five years, and the hero of numerous disguises and intrigues.

144 17. **old dame Ursula**: also the name of the pig woman in Jonson's play.

145 2. **the "Cloth"**: the clergy, who formerly wore a distinguishing costume of gray or black by which they might be recognized.

145 14-15. **"Golden lads and lasses must,"** etc. See *Cymbeline*, IV, ii.

Review Questions. 1. What literary use does Lamb make of the sense of taste? 2. Examine the use of color, light, and shade. Ainger calls this "a study in black." Defend statement. Cf. with color scheme in *St. Valentine's Day*. 3. Where does Lamb give dignity to homely subjects: (a) by use of learned words; (b) by poetic association (cf. Milton); (c) by classical and biblical allusions? 4. How does he produce his humorous effects? Find examples of pun, parody, and contrast. 5. What poem on a preëxistent state was written by a friend of Lamb's? 6. Explain the figure in "May the Brush supersede the Laurel." 7. Explain the following: *sauces Averni*, kibed heels, yclept, oleaginous, fuliginous, welkin, Cheapside, Hogarth, Rachel (Matthew ii. 18), *incunabula*, quoited, younkers, unctuous.

XIX. A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

London Magazine, September, 1822

In a letter to Bernard Barton of March 11, 1823, Lamb acknowledges his indebtedness for the idea of this essay to his friend, Thomas Manning, mathematical tutor in Cambridge. Mr. Charles Kent and Mr. Carew Hazlitt think that the author owed the suggestion to an Italian poem by Tigrinio Bistonio entitled *Gli Elogi del Porco* (Modena, 1761), "The Praises of the Pig." Bistonio was the pseudonym of the abbot Giuseppe Ferrari. Mr. Richard Garnett and Canon Ainger, however, dispute this opinion, and find the original tale in a treatise called *De Abstinentia* by Porphyry of Tyre in the third century. Manning may have seen the legend in some Chinese form during his travels in China or Thibet. On the other hand, it is more probable that he may have learned it from Thomas Taylor, the Platonist, who brought out a translation of Porphyry in 1823.

145 22. **a Chinese manuscript**: probably a fantastic creation of Lamb's imagination.

145 22. **my friend M.**: Thomas Manning. Lamb was introduced to him by Lloyd in 1799, and a lifelong friendship resulted. For several years an interesting correspondence passed between them, of which Talfourd says, "In his letters to Manning a vein of wild humour breaks out, of which there are but slight indications in the correspondence with his more sentimental friends; as if the very opposition of Manning's more scientific powers to his own force of sympathy provoked the sallies which the genial kindness of the mathematician fostered."

145 26-27. **their great Confucius**: the celebrated Chinese philosopher, traveler, and teacher (550-478 B.C.).

150 30-31. "Ere sin could blight," etc.: from Coleridge's *Epitaph on an Infant*, a poem in the joint volume of 1796.

152 9-10. **school . . . over London Bridge**: "an audacious indifference to fact." Lamb's school was not across the river.

153 10. **St. Omer's**: a Catholic college for British youth in the city of that name in France. Lamb, of course, never attended it.

Review Questions. 1. Note the humor of the title. Why better than one like "Tradition of the Origin of Cooking"? 2. Is the effect of the quotation "Ere sin could blight," etc., burlesque or mock heroic? Cf. treatment with *Battle of the Books* and *Rape of the Lock*. 3. Compare humor with that in essays already studied. Is it broader — more delicate? Why? 4. Is there a vein of *satire* in the essay? 5. How does it rank as a short story? 6. Examine point of view and sentence structure, and note effects. 7. Where is there a play on words? 8. Note meaning and use of the words: mast, younkers, booby, crackling, me (in second paragraph), *præludium*, saps, batten, villatic, brawn (boar's flesh), intenerating, and dulcifying.

XX. ON THE ACTING OF MUNDEN

London Magazine, October, 1822

153 (title). **Munden**, Joseph Shepherd (1758-1832): an English actor whose admiration for Garrick determined him to go on the stage. His first appearance in London was with a company of strolling players in 1790. He created the parts of Sir Robert Bramble, Ephraim Smooth, Caustic, Old Rapid, etc., and acted them with great applause. His greatest triumph was in the rôle of Old Dornton in *The Road to Ruin*. He retired from the stage on May 31, 1824.

153 27. **Cockletop**: a character in O'Keefe's (1747-1833) comedy *Modern Antiques; or, The Merry Mourners*.

154 3-4. "There the antic sate," etc. See *Richard II*, III, ii.

154 15-16. like the faces which . . . come, etc. Cf. De Quincey's *Confessions*, Wauchope's edition, pp. 137-140.

154 22. Hogarth. See note to the essay *On the Genius and Character of Hogarth*.

154 26. Farley, Charles (1771-1859): a London actor and theatrical machinist, author of *The Magic Oak*, *Aggression*, etc. He played with much success the parts of Jeremy in *Love for Love*, Grindoff in *The Miller and His Men*, and Lord Trinket in *The Jealous Wife*.

154 27. Liston, John (1776-1846): a noted London comedian, connected at various times with the Haymarket, Covent Garden, Olympic, and Drury Lane theaters. His most popular rôle was Paul Pry in John Poole's farce by that name. See Doran's *English Stage*, II, 351.

154 31. Hydra. See note on p. 353. Byron nicknamed his mother "Hydra."

155 9. Old Dornton: a great banker in Holcroft's comedy *The Road to Ruin* (1792). He adores his son Harry, whom he spoils by alternate indulgence and sternness.

155 19. "sessa": an exclamation urging to speed. See *King Lear*, III, iv, 104; vi, 76.

155 27. Cassiopeia's chair: a beautiful circumpolar constellation containing thirty stars brighter than the sixth magnitude. It represents the wife of Cepheus, an Ethiopian king, seated in a chair with both arms raised.

155 30. Fuseli, John Henry (1741-1825): a Swiss-English painter and art critic.

XXI. MUNDEN'S FAREWELL

London Magazine, July, 1824

Talfourd mentions a pleasing incident of the evening. On account of the dense crowd at the performance, Lamb and his sister were provided by Munden with seats in a corner of the orchestra close to the stage. During the play he saw Munden hand Lamb a huge tankard, which Elia quaffed to the dregs with a relish while his old friend looked on with evident gusto. Half a century later this same occurrence was related to Mr. Kent by Miss Kelly, who observed it from an upper box. It was also upon this occasion that Mary Lamb convulsed her almost tearful brother with the pun, "Sic transit gloria MUNDEN!"

156 15. Sir Peter Teazle: an old gentleman in Sheridan's *School for Scandal* (1777). He marries a country girl who proves vain, selfish,

and extravagant. He loves her but continually nags her for her inferior birth and rustic ways. See Watkins's *Life of Sheridan*.

156 16. **Sir Robert Bramble**: a character in Colman's *The Poor Gentleman* (1802). He is testy but generous, fond of argument but impatient of flattery.

156 18. **Jemmy Jumps**: a character in Shield's opera *The Farmer* (1788).

157 34. **Humphrey Dobbin**: a blunt old retainer and confidential servant of Sir Robert Bramble, under whose rough exterior beats a heart full of kindness.

Review Questions. 1. Analyze the humor in the description of Munden's facial expression. 2. On what ground is his work as an actor compared with Hogarth the artist's? 3. Observe the author's enthusiasm in *Munden's Farewell*. Lamb here shows plainly the joy of the artist in his work. 4. Describe Munden's dress and acting in the part of Old Dozey. 5. What do you learn of Lamb's favorite plays in the last two essays?

XXII. DETACHED THOUGHTS ON BOOKS AND READING

London Magazine, July, 1822

160 (quotation). **The Relapse**: a comedy by Sir John Vanbrugh (1666-1726). See note on p. 357.

160 10. **Shaftesbury**, third earl of, Anthony Ashley Cooper (1671-1713): author of *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions and Times* (1711).

160 11. **Jonathan Wild**: a police spy, the hero of a novel by Henry Fielding (1707-1754), the author of *Tom Jones*. Wild was a real character, but his adventures are partly fictitious. He is depicted as a coward, hypocrite, and bully, entirely devoid of human feeling. The purpose of the book, which is an ironical panegyric, is to expose the motives of the unprincipled great.

160 14. **biblia a-biblia**: (Greek) books that are not books, i.e. which do not deserve the title of books.

160 15-16. **the Literary excepted**: because Lamb was a contributor to the *Literary Pocket-book*. See Leigh Hunt's essay on *Pocket-books and Keepsakes*, Camelot ed.

160 18. **Hume**, David (1711-1776), author of the *History of England*; **Gibbon**, Edward (1737-1794), author of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*; **Robertson**, William (1721-1793), a Scotch historian,

author of the *History of Scotland* and *History of the Reign of Charles V*; **Beattie**, James (1735-1803), a Scotch poet, essayist, and philosopher, author of *The Minstrel*, *Essay on Truth*, etc.; **Soame Jenyns** (1704-1787), a miscellaneous London writer whose style was regarded in Lamb's day as a model of elegance. Among his works are *The Art of Dancing*, *The Nature and Origin of Evil*, *Internal Evidences of the Christian Religion*, and *Objections to the Taxation of Our American Colonies*.

160 20. **Flavius Josephus** (d. about 100 A.D.): author of the *Antiquities of the Jews* and *Wars of the Jews*.

161 1. **Paley**, William (1743-1805): an English theologian and philosopher.

161 9-10. a withering **Population Essay**: probably the *Essay on the Principle of Population* by Thomas Malthus (1766-1834).

161 10-11. **Steele**, Sir Richard (1672-1729), author of several comedies and founder of the *Tatler* and the *Guardian* (see note on p. 332); **Farquhar**, George (1678-1707), author of *Love in a Bottle*, *The Recruiting Officer*, *The Beaux' Stratagem*, and other popular plays; **Adam Smith** (1723-1790), author of *The Wealth of Nations* and founder of the science of political economy.

161 15. **Paracelsus**, Philippus Aureolus (1493-1541): a Swiss quack physician and alchemist, author of a visionary system of philosophy. He opposed the theory and practice of medicine in vogue in his time. See Browning's poem *Paracelsus*.

161 15-16. **Raymund Lully** (1235-1315): a Spanish alchemist, who went as a missionary to the Mussulmans of Asia and Africa. He was the author of *Ars Magna*, *A System of Logic*, and many other works.

161 34. **Vicar of Wakefield** (1766): by Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774). Dr. Primrose, the vicar, is the type of the poor, simple-minded, but pious clergyman with a large family in the rural districts of England.

162 5-6. some **Lothean cup**. The water of Lethe caused the lost souls to forget their sufferings.

162 10. **Fielding**, see note on p. 364; **Smollett**, see note on pp. 345, 346; **Sterne**, see note on p. 342.

162 16-17. "We know not where," etc: imperfectly quoted from *Othello*, V, ii, 12.

162 18. **Life of the Duke of Newcastle**. See note on pp. 334-335.

162 23-24. **Sir Philip Sydney** [Sidney] (1554-1586), the accomplished Elizabethan courtier, scholar, and soldier, author of *Arcadia*, *Apologie for Poesie*, etc.; **Bishop Taylor** (1613-1667), the eloquent pulpit orator and author of *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, etc.; **Fuller**, Thomas (1608-1661), see note on p. 346.

162 31. **Rowe**, Nicholas (1674-1718), and **Tonson**, Jacob (1656?-1736): brought out an edition of Shakespeare's plays in 1709. Rowe was poet laureate and author of *Jane Shore*, *Ulysses*, *The Fair Penitent*, and other tragedies. Tonson was a well-known London bookseller, and published Rowe's, Pope's, and Theobald's editions of Shakespeare.

163 6. **Beaumont**, Francis (1584-1616), and **Fletcher**, John (1579-1625). They wrote in collaboration thirteen dramas, the best known of which are *Philaster*, *The Maid's Tragedy*, *A King and No King*, and *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*.

163 10-11. **the Anatomy of Melancholy**. See note on p. 334.

163 15. **The wretched Malone**: Edmund Malone (1741-1812), an Irish critic and Shakespearean editor. The incident occurred in 1793 while he was visiting Stratford for the purpose of examining the municipal records. His large library is now at Oxford University.

163 33-34. **Kit Marlowe**: Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593), author of *Doctor Faustus*, *Edward II*, *The Jew of Malta*, and other tragedies in his "high astounding" blank verse; **Drayton**, Michael (1563-1631), author of *Polyolbion*, a poetical description of England and Wales; **Drummond**, William (1585-1649), of Hawthornden, author of sonnets and other short poems; **Cowley**, Abraham (1618-1667), a royalist poet, who enjoyed a great reputation during his lifetime, but who is remembered now only for the excellent style of his essays.

164 3. **the Faerie Queene**. See note on p. 354.

164 4. **Bishop Andrewes**: Launcelot Andrews (1555-1626), a famous theological writer who became bishop of Winchester.

164 32. **Nando's**: a London coffeehouse.

165 1. **diurnals**: journals. Both words are derivatives from the Latin *diurnalis*, daily, the latter coming through the French.

165 10-11. "The Royal Lover and Lady G——," "The Melting Platonic and the Old Beau": two cartoons on the dissolute Prince Regent, afterwards George IV (1762-1830).

165 14. **Poor Tobin**: John Tobin (1770-1804), a dramatic writer whose *Life* was published in 1820.

165 15-16. **Paradise Lost** (1667): Milton's great epic; **Comus**: a masque by Milton, acted at Ludlow Castle (1634).

165 20. **Candide**: the title of a novel by Voltaire (1694-1778) designed to undermine Christianity by subtle ridicule. The hero Candide bears his many accumulated misfortunes with cynical indifference.

Voltaire says "No." He tells you that Candide
Found life more tolerable after meals.

165 23. **Primrose Hill**: an eminence northwest of London.

165 23. **her Cythera**: Cythera was one of the Ionic islands and was sacred to Venus.

165 24. **Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded** (1741): the first modern novel, by Richardson, written in the form of letters. Pamela Andrews, a simple modest country girl in the service of a rich but profligate young squire, resists all his advances with prudence and meekness, and at length marries and reforms him.

166 1. **Snow Hill**: the old street from Newgate to Holborn Bridge, superseded by Skinner Street in 1802.

166 3. **Lardner, Nathaniel** (1684-1768): a Unitarian theologian.

166 6. **a porter's knot**: a pad worn on the head by porters to support burdens.

166 8. **the five points of Calvinistic theology**: (1) predestination; (2) irresistible grace; (3) original sin; (4) particular redemption; and (5) the final perseverance of the saints.

166 12. **Master Betty**: William Henry West (1790-1874), an actor who made his debut in London at the age of twelve, and in fifty-six nights realized £34,000. He was called the "Young Roscius," from the greatest of Roman actors.

166 15-16. **Johnson and Steevens's Shakespeare**. Dr. Johnson's edition was published in 1765 and was united with Steevens's a few years later.

166 29. **Saint Anthony** (251?-356?): an Egyptian abbot, called by some the founder of asceticism. He retired from the society of men and lived in a mountain cave where he was tempted by the devil in a variety of forms. The legend has been frequently depicted in art.

166 34-167 1. **a slight piece of mine**: Lamb's farce, *Mr. H—*, which, though finely cast and staged, failed from want of interest in the plot.

167 10-11. **"snatch a fearful joy"**: from Gray's *Ode on Eton College*.

167 11. **Martin B—**: Martin Charles Burney (d. 1852), a London attorney, son of Admiral Burney. He was a lifelong friend of Lamb, who wrote of him, "I have not found a whiter soul than thine."

167 12. **Clarissa Harlowe** (1748): Richardson's greatest novel, written in the form of letters. To avoid a marriage of her parents' making, Clarissa elopes to London under the protection of her lover, Richard Lovelace, who abuses her confidence and brings her to a death of grief and shame.

167 19-168 5. **"I saw a boy with eager eye,"** etc.: "one of Mary Lamb's pieces in the lost *Poetry for Children*" (Shepherd).

Review Questions. 1. Justify the title of the essay by an examination of its structure. 2. What do we learn of Lamb's literary likes and dislikes? 3. What do you know of the writings of Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, Steele, Farquhar, Smollett, Sterne, Thomson, Sidney, Taylor, Milton, Fuller, Burton, Marlowe, and others mentioned? 4. What gifts did Lamb possess as a critic? what limitations? Was his taste for literature normal? 5. Note the positive statement of the author on matters of opinion. 6. Explain the meaning and use of the following: Catholic, mantua-maker, Lethean, eterne, Edenized, varlet, *pro bono publico*, diurnals, *tête-à-tête*, casuist, swain, dilemma, pursy, cit, satyrs, hobgoblin, and mopping.

XXIII. OLD CHINA

London Magazine, March, 1823

"This beautiful essay tells its own story — this time, we may be sure, without romance or exaggeration of any kind. It is a contribution of singular interest to our understanding of the happier days of Charles and Mary's united life" (Ainger).

168 18. **perspective**: a device in art by which objects are so drawn on a flat surface as to appear at their proper distances.

168 26. **Mandarin**: the title of the governor of a province in China.

168 31-169 1. **angle of incidence**: the angle formed by one object meeting another. A line drawn in the direction of the lady's foot would terminate a furlong off!

169 5. **dancing the hays**: an old English country dance with intricate figures, frequently mentioned by writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

On holy-days, when Virgins meet
To dance the heyes with nimble feet.

HERRICK, *To Phillis*, 29, 30.

169 6. **couchant**: an heraldic term meaning that the animal is lying down with its head raised.

169 7. **Cathay**: the name given by Marco Polo to a region supposed to be Chinese Tartary. Cf. Bryon's "the ship from far Cathay," and Tennyson's "a cycle of Cathay."

169 8-9. **over our Hyson**. Hyson is a fragrant kind of green tea, so called from the Chinese word for springtime, the season when it is gathered.

169 10. *speciosa miracula*: beautiful wonders. Horace's expression referring to the stories of the *Iliad*.

169 17. *Bridget*: Mary Lamb.

169 33-34. *that folio Beaumont and Fletcher*. See note on p. 366.

170 5. *Islington*: a parish two miles north of St. Paul's. Lamb was not living there at this time, but rented a cottage there in August, 1823.

170 18. *your old corbeau*: your old coat. *Corbeau* is French for raven.

170 26. *Leonardo*. See note on p. 345.

170 31-32. *wilderness of Leonards*. Cf. Shylock's "wilderness of monkeys."

170 33. *Enfield*: a town in Middlesex ten miles north of London.

171 9. *Izaak Walton* (1593-1683): author of the *Complete Angler*, a book universally admired for its descriptions of country scenery and its cheerful philosophy. The Lea is a tributary of the Thames. Trout Hall is an inn where Piscator and Viator, two of the characters of the book, meet.

171 23. *the Battle of Hexham, and the Surrender of Calais*: comedies by George Colman (1762-1836).

171 24. *Bannister*, John (1760-1836), a noted comedian; *Mrs. Bland*, a popular actress at the opening of the nineteenth century.

171 24. *the Children in the Wood*: a comedy by Thomas Morton (1815).

171 32. *Rosalind in Arden*. See *As You Like It*.

171 39-33. *Viola at the Court of Illyria*. See *Twelfth Night*.

173 14-15. *cheerful Mr. Cotton*: Charles Cotton (1630-1687), an English burlesque poet, who added a second part on *Fly-fishing* to the fifth edition of the *Complete Angler*. The phrase "lusty brimmers" is from his lines on the *New Year*.

174 20. *Crœsus*: the last king of Lydia, whose name is synonymous with enormous wealth.

174 20. *the great Jew R——*: Rothschild.

174 23. *bed-tester*: a canopy over a bed.

Review Questions. 1. Is the title of this essay an adequate one for a paper on the compensations in being poor? 2. Does the essay show unity in its structure? 3. Explain the references to Rosalind and Viola. 4. What do you know of Beaumont and Fletcher and Izaak Walton? 5. Note Lamb's use of italics. 6. What can one learn from this essay of the author's range of interests, scholarship, tastes, etc.?

XXIV. POOR RELATIONS

London Magazine, May, 1823

175 2-3. a blot on your 'scutcheon: a term in heraldry signifying illegitimacy.

175 3-4. a death's-head at your banquet. Herodotus says, "The Egyptians have a man to carry around an image of a corpse at their entertainments, saying, 'Look at this, and drink and be merry; for such you shall be, when you die'" (*History*, II, 78).

175 4. Agathocles' pot: Agathocles (361-289 B.C.), the son of a Sicilian potter, who was exposed in infancy and brought up to the same trade. He raised himself from the ranks to become tyrant of Sicily.

175 30. a tide-waiter: one who is waiting for a lucky tide. Cf. Shakespeare's "There is a tide in the affairs of men," etc.

177 19. Richard Amlet, Esq.: a gamester in Vanbrugh's comedy *The Confederacy* (1705). His mother is a rich, vulgar tradeswoman, who settles £10,000 on her "sad scapegrace."

177 30-31. Poor W——: Favell. See note on p. 331.

178 16. with Nessian venom. The centaur Nessus was killed by Hercules for offering violence to Deianira. She steeped her husband's shirt in the blood of the centaur, in order, as she was led to believe, to secure her husband's love. Hercules, however, was poisoned by the shirt and died in agony.

178 17. Latimer, Hugh (1485?-1555): a graduate of Cambridge, burned at Oxford.

178 18. Hooker, Richard (1553-1600): a graduate of Oxford.

179 23. the Artist Evangelist. St. Luke was the patron saint of painters and physicians.

179 27-28. like Satan, "knew his mounted sign—and fled." See *Paradise Lost*, IV, 1013-1014; a punning paraphrase of "The fiend looked up, and knew His mounted scale aloft."

180 18. the Mint: the Royal Mint, erected in 1811 on the site of an old Cistercian abbey on Tower Hill.

181 2. these young Grotiuses. The reference is to the principal work of Hugo Grotius, *De Jure Belli et Pacis* (1625), in which the author, a Dutch jurist, founded the science of international law.

Review Questions. 1. Study in this essay Lamb's marvelous command of words. The opening paragraph shows his illustrative equipment as well as his resourceful vocabulary. 2. Explain the references to

Mordecai and Lazarus. 3. What is meant by "an old humourist"? Cf. Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*. 4. Why does Lamb use the verb form in -eth? 5. Note shift of tone from humorous to serious, also the use of both expository and narrative styles. 6. Compare the four studies in character, types of the poor relation. 7. An imitative essay might be written on *Rich Relations*.

XXV. THE OLD MARGATE HOY

London Magazine, July, 1823

182 (title). **Margate**: a seaport and watering place on the Isle of Thanet in Kent; **hoy**: a one-masted, cutter-rigged, and single-decked vessel. Ben Jonson in *The Alchemist* speaks of "six great slops bigger than three Dutch hoyes."

182 10. **the Universities**: Oxford and Cambridge.

182 12. **Henley**: a town in Oxfordshire, situated on the Thames thirty-six miles west of London, and famous for its boat races.

182 16-18. **Worthing, Brighton, Eastbourne, Hastings**: popular seaside resorts in Sussex, situated on the English Channel.

183 4. **a great sea-chimera**: a fire-breathing monster of the sea. See note on p. 353.

183 5. **that fire-god parching up Scamander**: Hephaestus, mentioned in the *Iliad*, XXI, 342 *seq.*

183 18. **Eastcheap**: originally the eastern market place of London, now a small street near the northern end of London Bridge.

183 20. **like another Ariel**. The reference is to Shakespeare's *Tempest*, I, ii, 198.

185 10. **phœnix**: a fabulous bird of Egypt which lived five hundred years, and when about to die made a nest in Arabia and burned itself to ashes, from which a young phoenix arose. See *The Marvellous Adventures of Sir John Maundevile, Kt.*, Chap. V (Grant ed., 1895).

185 18. **the Colossus at Rhodes**: a colossal statue of Apollo at Rhodes, one of the seven wonders of antiquity. Its straddling of the harbor was fictitious. It was destroyed by an earthquake soon after it was erected.

185 32. **the Reculvers**: twin beacon towers of a ruined monastery near Herne Bay in Kent.

187 24. **Orellana**: the name of the Amazon in early books and maps.

187 26-27. "For many a day," etc.: from Thomson's *Seasons*, "Summer," l. 1002.

187 28. "still-vexed Bermoothes": *The Tempest*, I, ii, 229.

187 39-33. "Be but as bugs," etc.: quoted inaccurately from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, II, xii, 25; "frighten" should be "fearen," "bugs" means "bug-bears, terrors," and "entral" means "depths."

188 1. *Juan Fernandez*: the island of Alexander Selkirk, the original of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.

188 16. the poem of Gebir: Landor's *Gebir*, Book V. Lamb criticized the poem punningly as "gibberish," but added, "Gebir hath some lucid intervals."

188 18. *Cinque Port*: a collective name for the five English Channel ports, — Hastings, Romney, Hythe, Dover, and Sandwich.

• 188 31. *Staffordshire*: one of the midland counties of England.

189 1. *Amphitrites*. Amphitrite was the wife of Neptune, the god of the sea.

189 7. *Meschek* [more properly Mesech]. See Psalm cxx. 5.

189 31. a book "to read strange matter in": quoted from *Macbeth*, I, v.

190 14. *Twickenham*. See note on p. 348.

190 25. "The daughters of Cheapside," etc.: inaccurately quoted from Randolph's *Ode to Master Anthony Stafford*:

The beauties of the Cheap, and wives of Lombard Street.

Review Questions. 1. Study the characterization of the lying traveler. 2. Note the pathetic contrast in the sketch of the poor diseased lad. 3. What is Lamb's explanation of the impression made by the first sight of the sea? 4. What are Lamb's objections to fashionable seaside resorts? 5. Where do you find a note of the bohemian, the unconventional? 6. Find satiric touches. 7. Observe the effects of the quotations.

XXVI. BLAKESMOOR IN H——SHIRE

London Magazine, September, 1824

Blakesmoor was Blakesware, in Hertfordshire, an ancient seat of the Plumer family, and not Gilston, as given by most of Elia's editors. This much-disputed point is settled by the following passage from Lamb's letter of August 10, 1827, to Barton: "You have well-described your old-fashioned paternal hall. Is it not odd that every one's recollections are of some such place? I had my Blakesware ('Blakesmoor' in the *London*)."
Before Lamb's visit recorded in the essay, the old

Blakesware mansion had been demolished and the contents, including the Twelve Cæsars and the Marble Hall, removed to Gilston. Mary Lamb has described this same house in "The Young Mahomedan," a story in the volume entitled *Mrs. Leicester's School*.

192 14. **Cowley**, Abraham (1618-1667): an English domestic poet. Lamb probably has in mind Cowley's essay on *Myself*, in which he tells how in his childhood he read Spenser in his mother's parlor.

192 24. **Ovid** (43 B.C.-18? A.D.): the great Roman poet of the Augustan age, author of the famous *Metamorphoses* (a collection of mythological stories), *Heroides*, and *Amores*.

192 25. **Actæon** in mid sprout, etc. Actæon beheld Diana bathing, and was consequently changed by the goddess into a stag, and was torn in pieces by his own dogs. In the picture he would be represented with sprouting horns.

192 27. **Dan Phœbus**. Apollo flayed the satyr Marsyas alive because he ventured to rival the god in music. See note on p. 336.

194 12. **coatless**: without a family coat of arms.

194 13. **Mowbray**, Thomas (d. 1399), Duke of Norfolk, who on the eve of a combat in the lists with the Earl of Hereford (afterwards Henry IV) in 1398 was banished for ten years by Richard II. He is a character in Shakespeare's play of *Richard II*; **De Clifford**, Richard Fitz Ponce, whose granddaughter Jane Clifford was the mistress of Henry II, was the founder of the proud Clifford family. See note on p. 322.

194 21. **capitulatory**: containing a summary of their achievements.

194 28. "Resurgam": Latin motto meaning "I shall rise again."

195 5. **Damocles**: a shepherd in Virgil's *Eclogue III*, who engages in a trial of skill in music with Menalchus.

195 8. **Ægon**: a shepherd mentioned in the above eclogue as the rival of Menalchus for the love of Neæra.

195 16. **those old W—s**. Lamb disguises the Plumer family under this initial. Mr. Ward, the author of *Tremaine*, did not become connected with the family until his marriage with Mrs. Plumer in 1828.

195 27-28. **so like my Alice**: Lamb's early love. See note on p. 336.

195 33. **in the margin**. Here followed in the original essay in the *London* some verses by Mary Lamb entitled *Helen*.

Review Questions. 1. What sentiments does Lamb feel for the old Blakesware manor? 2. What are his feelings about "pride of ancestry"? 3. Look up the meanings of the heraldic terms, e.g. "emblazoned," "trenchant," "scutcheon." 4. Note how much is made of the impressions of his childhood.

XXVII. CAPTAIN JACKSON

London Magazine, November, 1824

197 (title). **Captain Jackson.** Some suppose, with much plausibility, that Randal Norris of the Inner Temple was the original of this character sketch. When writing of living people it was Lamb's custom to change incidents freely.

197 19-20. **Althea's horn in a poor platter.** Amalthea's horn was the cornucopia, or horn of plenty. See *Paradise Lost*, II, 356.

197 27. the "mind, the mind, **Master Shallow**": from *a Henry IV*, III, ii. Shallow is a lying, roguish, weak-minded country justice, and is supposed to be a caricature of Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote.

198 13. **sate above the salt:** i.e. in a place of distinction, because nearer the head of the table, the saltcellar being in the middle.

199 19. **Glover**, Richard (1712-1785): a London merchant, for several years member of Parliament, and distinguished for his eloquence, integrity, and patriotism. He published *Leonidas*, *Boadicea*, *Medea*, *The Athenaid*, and a popular ballad, *Admiral Hosier's Ghost*.

201 4-7. "When we came down through Glasgow town," etc.: from a beautiful old ballad, of which Lamb was very fond, —

Waly, waly, up the bank,
And waly, waly, down the brae.

201 20. **Tibbs**, Ned: a poor, clever, dashing young beau in Goldsmith's *A Citizen of the World* (1759). He imagined his garret to be the choicest spot in London, and all the people of fashion to be his familiar acquaintances.

201 20. **Bobadil**: a character in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour* (1598). He is an ignorant, shallow, cowardly fellow, who persuades his dupes that he is an amazing hero. Henry Woodward (1717-1777) played the part with great applause. Bobadil was also one of the favorite rôles of Dickens when a young actor.

Review Questions. 1. Observe the finely drawn portrait of Jackson, — the type of those who know how "to put a handsome face upon indigent circumstances." 2. In drawing his character what use is made of his suppers? 3. How is an atmosphere of hospitality and good cheer created? 4. Compare Jackson's character with old Caleb's in Dickens's *Cricket on the Hearth*. Which has the more humor? pathos? high spirits? 5. Was the captain a victim of self-deception? 6. Has Lamb succeeded in making the personalities of the daughters distinct?

XXVIII. BARBARA S—

London Magazine, April, 1825

201 (title) Barbara S—: Fanny Kelly (1790-1882), a well-known London actress and a highly esteemed friend of Lamb's. Miss Kelly told Mr. Charles Kent that the incident related in this essay occurred in 1799 at Drury Lane Theater, where she was then "a miniature chorister." Some recently discovered letters reveal the interesting fact that Lamb made her a proposal of marriage.

202 18-19. She had already drawn tears in young Arthur. See *King John*, IV, ii.

202 19-20. had rallied Richard . . . in the Duke of York, etc. See *Richard III*, II, iv, and III, ii.

202 23. the Children in the Wood. See note on p. 355.

203 23. the part of the Little Son, etc. The play referred to is *Isabella; or, the Fatal Marriage*, a tragedy by Thomas Southern (1694). The part was also played by Mrs. Siddons. The child is Biron's son.

204 4. Liston, John (1776-1846). See note on p. 363.

204 5. Mrs. Charles Kemble was Miss De Camp, an actress.

204 6. her accomplished husband: Charles Kemble (1775-1854), a noted English actor, brother of Mrs. Sarah Siddons and John Kemble.

204 7. Macready, William Charles (1793-1873): an English tragedian, who attained front rank in his profession. His best parts were Macbeth, Lear, Cassius, Iago, Virginius, and Richelieu. The Astor Place riot occurred during his visit to America.

204 12. Dodd, James William. See note on p. 357.

204 13. Baddeley, Robert (1733-1794): an English actor, the original Moses in *The School for Scandal*. Doran says that "he was the last actor to wear the uniform of scarlet and gold prescribed for the gentlemen of His Majesty's household, who were patented actors." He endowed an asylum for aged and broken-down actors.

207 (footnote). The maiden name of this lady was Street: a characteristic fiction of the author's designed to mislead the reader and to impart a tone of reality to the essay.

Review Questions. 1. What is the difference between this essay and a short story? 2. Note the rambling construction and reminiscent tone of the essay. 3. What quality of Lamb's style is illustrated in the anecdote of the salty fowl? 4. What by that of the returned half guinea? 5. Which predominates in this essay—narrative or reflection? In which is Lamb at his best?

XXIX. THE SUPERANNUATED MAN

London Magazine, May, 1825

After a severe illness in the winter of 1824-1825, Lamb asked to be retired from his position in the East India House. The germs from which grew this finished essay are found in his letters during that period. "Oh, that I were kicked out of Leadenhall," he wrote to Barton, February 10, "with every mark of indignity and a competence in my fob. The birds of the air would not be so free as I should. How I would prance and curvet it, and pick up cowslips, and ramble about purposeless as an idiot!" For over eight weeks he was kept in suspense. At last, on March 29, the directors decided to retire him on a pension. "Here am I then," he wrote to Wordsworth, April 6, "after thirty-three years' slavery sitting in my own room at eleven o'clock this finest of all April mornings, a freed man, with £441 a year for the remainder of my life, live I as long as John Dennis, who outlived his annuity and starved at ninety. . . . I came home FOREVER on Tuesday in last week. The incomprehensibleness of my condition overwhelmed me. It was like passing from life into eternity."

207 (title). **Superannuated**: retired on pension.

207 (quotation). "Sera tamen resexit libertas": adapted with change of order from Virgil's *Eclogue I*, 28.

207 (quotation). O'Keefe, John (1747-1833): an Irish dramatist who wrote many comic pieces for the Haymarket and Covent Garden theaters.

208 7. **Mincing Lane** leads off Fenchurch Street, between the Bank of England and the Tower of London.

210 10. **L**—: the fictitious Lacy mentioned afterwards.

210 28. **B**—: the fictitious Bosanquet mentioned afterwards.

211 12, 13. **the house of Boldero**, etc. The directors of the India House are mentioned as if they were a private firm of merchants. No men with the names given were directors at the time of the author's retirement.

211 14. "Esto perpetua!" These were the dying words of Father Paolo Sarpi (1552-1623), spoken of his native Venice.

212 11-12. "That's born," etc. This beautiful quotation from Thomas Middleton (d. 1627) is given in Lamb's *Specimens*.

213 1-2. **a Tragedy by Sir Robert Howard**: *The Vestal Virgin; or, The Roman Ladies*. The lines are spoken by the vestal Virginia (V, i). Howard (1626-1698) was Dryden's brother-in-law, and joint author of *The Indian Queen*.

213 29-30. **Ch**—: Chambers; **Do**—: Dodwell; **Pl**—: Plumer.

213 32. **a Gresham**: probably Sir Thomas Gresham (1519?–1579), a wealthy financier, who founded the Royal Exchange in memory of an only son. Two other members of this distinguished family became Lord Mayors.

213 32. **a Whittington**: Richard (or Dick) Whittington (d. 1423), a wealthy merchant who became Lord Mayor of London. The story of him and his cat is found in popular ballads and nursery tales.

214 7. **Aquinas, St. Thomas**. See note on p. 363.

214 16. **Carthusian**: an order of monks founded in 1086 by St. Bruno, who retired with six companions to the solitude of La Chartreuse, Grenoble. In England the name was corrupted into Charterhouse.

214 30. **the Elgin marbles**: the sculptures by Phidias, originally on the Parthenon at Athens, but brought to London by Lord Elgin (1801–1803), and purchased in 1816 by the British government.

215 3. **Wednesday feelings**: a reference to Lamb's Wednesday evening parties. See the Introduction, pp. xvii–xix.

215 8-9. **Black Monday**. Lamb means the beginning of another week of toil at the "desk's dead wood." "Black Monday was Easter Monday; so called because, in 1360, when King Edward III was encamped before Paris, the day was full dark of mist and hail, and so bitter cold that many men died on their horses' backs with the cold" (Stow's *Chronicles*).

215 14. **huge cantle**: a large slice or corner. See *1 Henry IV*, III, i, 100.

215 18-19. **It is Lucretian pleasure**, etc.: an allusion to Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, II, i.

216 11. "As low as to the fiends": from *Hamlet*, II, ii, part of the fragment on Priam's slaughter.

216 12. **I am no longer * * * * ***. Lamb originally had here in place of the asterisks "J—s D—n," and signed the essay "J. D."

216 17. **cum dignitate**: part of a popular phrase *otium cum dignitate* in Cicero's *Pro Sestio*, l. 45.

216 20. **Opus operatum est**: composed probably by the author for the sake of the pun.

Review Questions. 1. Analyze the structure of the essay, noting (a) Lamb's mode of selecting and arranging his matter; (b) difference between this sketch and a short story; (c) the emotional climax. 2. Observe the numerous disguises and mystifications. 3. Which

predominates, narrative or reflection? 4. Note the prevailing tone and emotional level of the piece. 5. Is there any humor? pathos? satire? philosophy? 6. Find and classify examples of hyperbole, personification, metonymy, metaphor, simile, epigram, paradox, and other rhetorical devices. 7. Explain biblical allusions, "Lucretian pleasure," and "a poor Carthusian."

XXX. SANITY OF TRUE GENIUS

New Monthly Magazine, May, 1826

This essay was originally published as a sequel to the *Popular Fallacies*. It was suggested to Lamb by a famous saying of Dryden's that great wit is nearly allied to madness. He here sets himself to the task of disproving and controverting this statement, using Shakespeare as a conspicuous example. This essay is more in the argumentative style than the other essays of Elia. "No detached sentences can," says Ainger, "convey an idea of this splendid argument. Nothing that Lamb has written proves more decisively how large a part the higher imagination plays in true criticism."

217 1-6. "So strong a wit did Nature to him frame," etc.: from Cowley's lines *On the Death of Mr. William Hervey*.

217 19. to be mad with Lear: the octogenarian hero of Shakespeare's tragedy *King Lear* (1605), who, being refused hospitality by his ungrateful daughters Regan and Goneril, spends a night raving in the storm. See III, ii, iii, iv, and vi.

217 20. Timon: the type of the misanthrope, or man hater, in Shakespeare's tragedy *Timon of Athens* (1608).

217 24. Kent, the Earl of, who disguised as Caius faithfully attends upon Lear in his misfortunes.

217 25. Flavius: the faithful, honest steward of Timon.

217 32. Proteus. See Gayley's *Classic Myths*, p. 86.

218 2. Caliban: the "freckled whelp" of the witch Sycorax, a savage monster, slave of Prospero in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1610). Coleridge speaks of him as having "the dawnings of understanding without reason or the moral sense."

218 23. Lane's novels. Lane was a London publisher, who issued numerous light works of fiction generally known as the novels of the Minerva Press.

219 14. the cave of Mammon. See Spenser's *Faërie Queene*, Legend of Sir Guyon, the Knight of Temperance, Book II, Canto vii.

219 19. the Hesperian fruit: the golden apples which grew in the mythical "Hesperian fields," or orchards, in an island of the Atlantic.

219 19. **Tantalus.** See Gayley's *Classic Myths*, p. 350.

219 19-20. **Pilate washing his hands.** See Matthew xxvii. 24.

219 22. the **Cyclops**: a race of one-eyed giants, represented in the later mythology as assistants in Vulcan's forge, where they fabricated Jupiter's thunderbolts.

Review Questions. 1. Draw up a brief showing the logical structure of Lamb's argument. 2. Judging by this essay, what peculiar gifts did Lamb possess as a critic? 3. Trace out the passage in the opening paragraph reminiscent of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Books I-III. 4. What impression is given by the essay of the author's reasoning powers? 5. Examine carefully the illustrative passage from the *Faerie Queene*. 6. Explain the meaning of the classical allusions: e.g. Proteus' "wild sea-brood," "Hesperian fruit," "the waters of Tantalus," and "the forge of the Cyclops."

XXXI. TO THE SHADE OF ELLISTON

The Englishman's Magazine, August, 1831

Talfourd speaks of this and the succeeding essay on Elliston as "among the most original, the least constrained, and the most richly coloured of his works" (*Letters*, p. 62). The subject of the rhapsody was Robert William Elliston (1774-1831), who achieved great celebrity in London as an actor and manager. "After a career showing great versatility and power, together with many excesses and absurdities, he died the first comedian of his day. Some of his best characters in comedy were Doricourt, Charles Surface, Rover, and Ranger, and in tragedy Hamlet, Romeo, and Hotspur" (*Century Cyclopaedia of Names*).

220 10. **Avernus**: a designation, by the Latin poets, of the lower world, the entrance to which, according to Virgil, was a cave on the shore of Lake Avernus in Campania.

220 11. **Rover**: a character in Mrs. Aphra Behn's comedy *The Rover* (1680). He is a dissolute young spark who sets off vice as "naughty but yet nice."

220 12. **Elysian streams.** According to Homer, Elysium was the blissful abode of the virtuous dead, on the border of the ocean stream.

220 20. **Pleasure House.** Cf. such allegorical houses of pleasure as Spenser's House of Pride and Thomson's Castle of Indolence.

220 20-21. **thy Palace of Dainty Devices**: a phrase probably suggested by Richard Edward's *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* (1576), a collection of miscellaneous poems.

220 21. **Louvre**: a museum of fine arts in Paris, containing one of the most priceless collections of sculpture and paintings in the world.

220 21. **White Hall**: a London palace famous for its associations with the Stuarts and for its banqueting hall, which contains a number of celebrated paintings by Rubens.

220 24. **Tartarus**. See note on p. 330.

220 24. **the Blessed Shades**. See note on "Elysian streams," p. 379.

220 27. **a receptacle apart for Patriarchs, etc.** According to the scholastic theologians of the Middle Ages the abode of shades awaiting the Resurrection was divided into four compartments, reserved respectively for unbaptized children, the Fathers of the Church, average good people being cleansed and prepared for Heaven (Purgatory), and lunatics (*limbus fatuorum*, or Paradise of Fools).

221 1-7. "Up thither like aerial vapours fly," etc.: a parody of the description of the Limbo of Vanity in *Paradise Lost*, Book III, 348 seq. See Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, V, for a similar Limbo of the Moon.

221 12. **Green Rooms**: the retiring rooms, near the stage, for actors and actresses.

221 14. **Figurantes**: girls dancing in groups, or figures; here ballet girls.

221 20-21. **in crazy Stygian wherry**. Charon, "the old boatman," rowed the shades across the river Styx, which flowed nine times around the infernal regions. According to some the river was the Acheron.

221 30. **candle-snuffer**: the menial whose business it was to apply an "extinguisher" to the candles, which were generally used for lighting in Lamb's day.

222 4. **à la Poppington**. See note on p. 357.

222 7. **the old Thracian Harper**: Orpheus, who visited the infernal regions in quest of his wife Eurydice.

222 18. **Rhadamanthus**: one of the judges in Pluto's realms.

222 23-24. **upon the boards of Drury**: Drury Lane Theater, one of the principal playhouses of London, situated on Russell Street, near Drury Lane. It was first opened in 1663.

222 27-28. **those Medusean ringlets**: Medusa had serpents in place of hair. Lamb had in mind Rehoboam's threat, "I will chastise you with scorpions" (1 Kings xii. 14).

222 32. **Plaudito, et Valeto:** applaud and farewell. The Roman plays ended with a request of the audience to applaud.

222 35. **Mr. H.:** Lamb's farce which met with failure amid hisses at Drury Lane.

Review Questions. 1. Find examples of the use of the pun and other witty allusions. 2. Why is Orpheus' trip to Hades described as a "tiresome monodrame"? 3. Note how Lamb has suggested Elliston's personality by certain subtle touches. 4. Compare the tone of this essay with such works as Lang's *Letters to Dead Authors* and Jerome's *House-boat on the Styx*.

XXXII. ELLISTONIANA

Englishman's Magazine, August, 1831

This and the preceding essay were prompted by the death of the actor in July, 1831.

223 17-18. **So Lovelace sold his gloves in King Street.** Lovelace, a character in Murphy's *Three Weeks after Marriage*, is a young aristocrat, who tries to win by flattery the daughter of Drugget, a rich but vulgar tradesman. His finest work was the Aphrodite Anadyomene.

224 19. **Apelles:** a great Athenian painter of the times of Philip and Alexander.

224 19-20. **So G. D. always poetises:** George Dyer. See note on p. 325.

224 24-225 1. **Did he play Ranger?** Ranger is the madcap cousin of Clarind and the leading character in Dr. Hoadly's comedy *The Suspicious Husband* (1747).

225 20. **Cibber, Colley (1671-1757):** an English actor and dramatist. Among his plays are *Love's Last Shift*, *The Careless Husband*, *The Double Gallant*, and *The Provoked Husband*. He was made poet laureate in 1730 and was satirized as Dulness in Pope's *Dunciad*. He published an *Apology for My Life* in 1740.

226 2-3. **St. Dunstan's Church . . . with its punctual giants.** The old clock had two wooden giants to strike the hours. See Baedeker's *London*, p. 135.

226 15-16. **the consular exile:** Marius.

226 16-17. **a more illustrious exile:** Napoleon I.

226 22. **small Olympic:** a theater for light comedy and farces, situated on the Strand and Wych Street.

227 1. **Sir A——C**——: Sir Anthony Carlisle, the surgeon.

227 18-19. **the confidence of a Vestris**: Lucia Elizabetta Bartolozzi, by marriage Madame Vestris (1813) and Mrs. Matthews (1838); an actress at Drury Lane, 1820-1831, and later manager of the Olympic and Lyceum theaters. She possessed a fine contralto voice.

227 31-32. **the son of Peleus**: Achilles.

227 32. **Lycaon**: a son of Priam and Laothoe. He was slain by Achilles in the Trojan war. See Homer's *Iliad*, Book XXI.

228 4. **Surrey Theatre**: on Blackfriar's Road. Melodramas and farces are usually given there.

228 30-31. **the munificent and pious Colet**: John Colet (1466-1519), a London scholar and theologian, dean of St. Paul's and founder of St. Paul's School.

228 31. **the Pauline Muses**: either certain local so-called "Muses" of St. Paul's School, or the young women who frequented Paul's Walk in the nave of old St. Paul's.

Review Questions. 1. Whom does Lamb mean by "the consular exile," and whom by "a more illustrious exile"? 2. Note the quiet tone of this essay as compared with the first on Elliston. Which is the more imaginative? emotional? original? 3. What is the quality of the humor in the two essays? 4. Show why the second is a masterpiece of character analysis,— the first a satirical rhapsody.

XXXIII. NEWSPAPERS THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Englishman's Magazine, October, 1831

This essay has a peculiar autobiographic interest as it records, in the nature of confessions, the unfortunate experiences of Lamb as a paragrapher for several London journals. His newspaper contributions began a little prior to 1798 and ceased in 1803. During this most trying time of poverty and struggle with ill health he was connected with the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Morning Post*, and the *Albion*. Lamb was unfitted by temperament for journalism, which rapidly undermined his health. Stuart said that he "could never make anything of his writings. Of politics he knew nothing; and his drollery was vapid when given in short paragraphs for a newspaper" (*Gentleman's Magazine*, June, 1838).

229 (title). **Newspapers Thirty-Five Years Ago**: i.e. 1796. This essay first received its present title in the volume of *Last Essays of Elia* (1833).

229 1. **Dan Stuart**: editor of the *Morning Post*. Lamb was introduced to him by Coleridge, who repeatedly but unsuccessfully urged Stuart to settle Lamb on a salary. Dyer introduced him to Perry, editor of the *Morning Chronicle*.

229 20. **the Abyssinian Pilgrim**: James Bruce (1730-1794), a Scotch traveler who explored Syria, the Nile valley, and Abyssinia (1768-1773). His *Travels to Discover the Sources of the Nile* appeared in 1790 in five volumes, and has been called the epic of African travel.

229 23. **Christ's Hospital**. See note on p. 329.

230 5. **Tottenham**: a suburb of London in Middlesex, six miles north of St. Paul's.

230 13-14. **the Gnat which preluded to the *Aeneid***. *Culex* or *The Gnat* is a supposed early work of Virgil's. It is the story of a goatherd, who, while asleep, was saved from a serpent's attack by the bite of a gnat. The insect was crushed inadvertently, but its shade appeared and reproached its slayer. The goatherd thereupon erected a tomb for the repose of his benefactor.

230 14. **the Duck which Samuel Johnson trod on**. A fictitious story, refuted by Boswell, is told of Dr. Johnson to the effect that when three years old he chanced to tread upon a duckling, the eleventh of a brood, and killed it. He then dictated to his mother this epitaph:

Here lies good master duck,
Whom Samuel Johnson trod on;
If it had lived, it had been *good luck*,
For then we'd had an *odd one*.

See Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Vol. I, p. 15 (Malone ed.).

230 28-29. **the trite and obvious flower of Cytherea**: the red rose which was sacred to Venus.

230 29. **the flaming costume of the lady**, etc. See Revelation xvii. 1-4.

231 4-5. **Autolycus-like in the Play**: from *Winter's Tale*, IV, iv, 201.

231 8. **Allusively to the flight of Astræa**. Astræa was the daughter of a Titan. When the Brazen Age began she was the last of the immortals to leave the earth and fled to the skies, where Jove made her the constellation Virgo. She is called the goddess of justice. Mrs. Aphra Behn was nicknamed Astrea by Pope and his contemporaries. "How loosely doth Astrea tread the stage."

232 9. **go-to-beds with the lamb**. See Lamb's *Popular Fallacy* entitled "That We Should Lie Down with the Lamb."

232 13. **Aquarius**: the water bearer, one of the signs of the zodiac (January 20 to February 18). It is so called because it appears when the Nile begins its overflow.

232 14. **Bacchus**: the god of wine.

232 15. **Basilian water-sponges**. Basilan is an island in the Sulu Archipelago famous for its sponges.

232 16. **Mont Ague**, or Volcan de Agua: a volcano in Guatemala which discharges water.

232 16. **Capulets**: a noble family in Verona, in feudal enmity with the Montagues in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

232 29. "revocare gradus, superasque evadere ad auras," etc.: from Virgil's *Aeneid*, VI, 128.

233 4. **Sabbatical exemptions**. By a Jewish law all lands must lie fallow one year in seven.

233 6. **the mountain must go to Mahomet**. For the origin of the proverb, see Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* ("Mountain").

233 15-16. **The craving dragon . . . in Bel's temple**. See *The History of Bel and the Dragon*, one of the apocryphal books of the Bible.

233 21. **Bob Allen**, our quondam schoolfellow. This was at Christ's Hospital, where Allen was a Grecian.

234 30. **Boaden**, James (1762-1839): an English dramatist, and biographer of Kemble, Mrs. Siddons, Mrs. Jordan, and Mrs. Inchbald. His works include *The Secret Tribunal*, *An Italian Monk*, and *Aurelio and Miranda*.

235 17. **John Fenwick**. See note on p. 333.

236 10. **Mr. Bayes**. See note on p. 350.

236 19. **an unlucky, or rather lucky epigram**. The verses are directed at Sir James Mackintosh, who had accepted the recordership of Bombay from Mr. Addington. The epigram is as follows:

Though thou 'rt like Judas, an apostate black,
In the resemblance one thing dost thou lack;
When he had gotten his ill-purchased pelf,
He went away, and wisely hanged himself;
This thou may do at last, yet much I doubt
If thou hast any bowels to gush out!

236 23-24. **Citizen Stanhope**: Charles Earl Stanhope (1753-1816), an English statesman and scientist, who sympathized with the French Revolution.

236 30. **Somerset House**: a palace in the Strand used for government offices.

XXXIV. ON THE TRAGEDIES OF SHAKESPEARE

CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR FITNESS FOR
STAGE REPRESENTATION

Talfourd records a controversy between Lamb and Thomas Barnes, the brilliant editor of the *London Times*, respecting the comparative tragic power of Dante and Shakespeare. The scene occurred in Lamb's room long after midnight in the year 1816. Some casual reference to the article on King Lear brought forth an expression of enthusiastic admiration from the editor, "which was the more striking for its contrast with his usually sedate demeanor." "I think I see him now," writes Talfourd, "leaning forward upon the little table on which the candles were just expiring in their sockets, his fists clenched, his eyes flashing, and his face bathed in perspiration, exclaiming to Lamb, 'And do I not know, my boy, that you have written about Shakespeare and Shakespeare's own Lear, finer than any one ever did in the world, and won't I let the world know it?'"

237 4. **Mr. Garrick**, David (1717-1779): the greatest actor of the eighteenth century. He was a member of Dr. Johnson's Club, and the favorite of all London. See note on p. 350.

239 14. **Mr. K.**: John Kemble. See note on p. 346.

239 15. **Mrs. S.**: Sarah Siddons (1755-1831), the most celebrated English tragic actress. She took a prominent part in the revival of Shakespeare, playing the parts of the tragic heroine with extraordinary success. Lady Macbeth was her greatest rôle. Sir Joshua Reynolds painted her as "The Tragic Muse." See Hazlitt's essay on Mrs. Siddons.

241 13. **Clarissa Harlowe**: Richardson's most popular novel. See note on p. 367.

241 17. **Bajazet**: sultan of Turkey, a fierce, indomitable character in Rowe's *Tamerlane* (1702). In Lamb's time the part was acted by John Kemble with great applause.

241 21. **Posthumus**: the husband of Imogen in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*.

241 24-26. **As beseem'd fair couple**, etc. See *Paradise Lost*, VIII, 100 seq.

242 2. **Betterton**, Thomas (1635?-1710): son of a cook of Charles I, and a noted actor in the great plays of the Elizabethan dramatists. "Pepys at the beginning of his career, and Pope at the end spoke of him as the best actor they had ever seen."

243 17. **Banks**, John (1650-1696?): a minor playwright, author of *The Rival Kings*, *The Innocent Usurper*, etc.

243 17. **Lillo**, George (1693-1739): author of *The London Merchant*, or *George Barnwell*, *Fatal Curiosity*, etc.

247 17. **Dame Quickly**: Mistress Nell Quickly, hostess of the tavern in Eastcheap, frequented by Prince Hal and Falstaff.

247 17-18. "like one of those harlotry players": from *1 Henry IV*, II, iv, 437.

247 25. **the Gamester**: Beverley in Edward Moore's tragedy (1753). The Mrs. Beverley compared with Lady Macbeth is his wife. She was a favorite character with the actresses of the time.

247 28. **Belvidera**: the wife of Jaffier, one of the conspirators in Otway's *Venice Preserved* (1682). "We have to check our tears," says Scott, "although well aware that the Belvidera with whose sorrows we sympathize is no other than our own inimitable Mrs. Siddons" (*The Drama*). Mrs. Porter, Mrs. Barry, Miss O'Neill, and Miss Faust also acted the part in the old London theaters.

247 28. **Calista**: a character in Rowe's *The Fair Penitent* (1703), acted by Mrs. Siddons and Miss Brunton.

247 28. **Isabella**: a nun in Southern's *The Fatal Marriage* (1692). It was a part considered "scarcely inferior in pathos to Belvidera" (Chambers). Hamilton painted Mrs. Siddons as Isabella. Campbell says that Mrs. Barry was unrivaled in that part.

247 28. **Euphrasia**: a character in Murphy's *Grecian Daughter* (1772). She saves the life of her aged father, who is dying of starvation in a dungeon, by fostering him at her breast.

249 5. **Cibber**. See note on p. 381.

249 6. "With their darkness durst affront his light": from *Paradise Lost*, VI, 150.

250 18. **Glenalvon**: the heir of Lord Randolph in Home's tragedy *Douglas* (1757). He is killed by Norval, the son of Lady Randolph.

252 6. "they themselves are old": from *King Lear*, II, iv, 185-188. The reproaches belong rather to III, ii, 15-24.

252 12. **Tate has put his hook**, etc.: Nahum Tate (1652-1715), a minor poet and playwright, who was appointed poet laureate in 1692. He made with Cibber an adaptation of Shakespeare's *King Lear* at the time of the theatrical revival of the Restoration. In this Gallicized perversion of the tragedy the Fool and France are left out, Edgar is made the lover of Cordelia from the outset, and the play ends happily. It was the only acting copy used by all the great actors — Betterton, Garrick, Kemble, and Kean — from 1680 till 1838, when Shakespeare's

version was restored by Macready at Covent Garden. See Macready's *Reminiscences*.

Canon Ainger speaks of this essay as a "noble vindication of Shakespeare's original," and says: "No one feels that he is either patronizing or judging Shakespeare. He takes Lear, as it were, out of the hands of literature, and regards him as a human being placed in the world where all men have to suffer and be tempted. We forget that he is a character in a play, or even in history. Lamb's criticism is a commentary on life, and no truer homage could be paid to the dramatist than that he should be allowed for the time to pass out of our thoughts" (Ainger's *Life of Lamb*, pp. 177-178).

255 4. **Tom Brown** (1778-1820): a Scotch physician, philosopher, and poet; author of *An Inquiry into the Relation of Cause and Effect*, *Paradise of Coquettes*, *The War-Fiend*, *Agnes*, *Emily*, etc.

255 6. **Bully Dawson**: a London sharper, bully, and debauchee of the seventeenth century, portrayed in *The Spectator*, No. 2.

256 8. **the Orrery Lecturer**. "An Orrery" was an astronomical toy to show the relative movements of the planets, etc., invented by George Graham and so named by Steele as a compliment to the Earl of Orrery.

256 13-18. "Time would run back," etc.: from Milton's *Hymn on the Nativity*.

256 20. **the Enchanted Isle**: the island of Prospero in *The Tempest*.

257 26-27. **Gertrude's first and second husband**. See *Hamlet*, III, iv, 54.

258 9. **Falstaff**. See *1 Henry IV*, *2 Henry IV*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

258 9. **Shallow**. See *2 Henry IV* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

258 10. **Sir Hugh Evans**. See *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

Review Questions. 1. What is Lamb's criticism of Garrick's epitaph in Westminster Abbey? 2. What does the character of Hamlet lose when acted? 3. Lamb's view of naturalness in acting. 4. For what immoral teaching does he censure *George Barnwell*? 5. Give Lamb's explanation of Hamlet's harsh treatment of Ophelia. 6. What are Lamb's objections to Tate and Cibber's alterations in *King Lear*? 7. What fault does he find in Mr. C.'s acting of Richard III? 8. Why does he think that Lear cannot be adequately acted? 9. What are Lamb's views in regard to the acting of supernatural characters? 10. Why is a romantic play like *The Tempest* unsuited for stage representation? 11. What light does this essay throw on Lamb's critical and argumentative powers?

XXXV. NOTES ON THE ELIZABETHAN AND OTHER DRAMATISTS

In the notes to his *Specimens of the English Dramatic Poets*, Lamb was in his most congenial field, and is seen at his best as a critic. "Where no disturbing forces interfered," says Canon Ainger, "he exercised a faculty almost unique in the history of criticism. When Southey heard of his *Specimens*, he wrote to Coleridge: 'If co-operative labour were as practicable as it is desirable, what a history of English literature might he, you, and I set forth!' . . . As it is, Lamb's contribution to that end is of the rarest value. If it is too much to say that he singly revived the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it is because we see clearly that the revival was coming, and would have come even without his help. But he did more than recall attention to certain forgotten writers. He flashed a light from himself upon them, not only heightening every charm and deepening every truth, but making even their eccentricities beautiful and lovable. And in doing this he has linked his name for ever with theirs."

260 (heading). **Christopher Marlowe** (1564-1593): the most brilliant of the group of dramatists immediately preceding Shakespeare. The characteristics of his style are his swelling blank verse, his delight in beauty of color and sound, his riot of passion, and his craving for immensity. His most important plays are *Tamburlaine*, *Doctor Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Edward II*. See *Mermaid* ed. He also wrote a paraphrase of Musæus's *Hero and Leander*, and a number of beautiful songs.

260 19. **Lust's Dominion**. "This play was published as Marlowe's in 1657, but is probably the same play as *The Spanish Moor's Tragedy*, now attributed to Dekker, Haughton, and Day, printed in 1600, but which was certainly founded on a much older one" (Fleay).

260 21. "Come live with me," etc.: a song first printed in the *Passionate Pilgrim* in 1599. See Ward's *English Poets*, Vol. II.

261 3. **King Cambyses' vein**. *Cambyses, King of Persia* (1561?), a curious tragicomedy by Thomas Preston, has, in consequence of its being cited by Shakespeare, become proverbial for rant.

261 6. **Pistol**: Falstaff's ensign in *2 Henry IV* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. He is a boastful, ignorant, unprincipled bully. Theophilus Cibber (1703-1758) was the best actor of Pistol.

261 12. **Tamburlaine the Great**: a tragedy in two parts, first acted in 1587, based on the lives of Timur by Pedro Mexia and Petrus Perondinus, translated by Fortescue. See Bullen's Introduction to *Marlowe's*

Works, p. xxii. "The subject of *Tamburlaine*," says Dowden, "is a mere lust of dominion, . . . the love of power in its crudest shape" (*Transcripts and Studies*, p. 44).

261 22. **Edward the Second**: a tragedy based on the life, abdication, and murder of King Edward II (1284-1327). It was probably written about 1590, but was not published until 1598. See Ward's *History of Dramatic Literature*.

261 29. **The Rich Jew of Malta**: a tragedy written about 1588, presenting the popular idea of an avaricious, murderous Jew. In 1818 it was revived by Kean at Drury Lane. See Morley's *English Writers*, Chap. X, p. 117.

262 11. **Doctor Faustus**, *The Tragical History of*: a dramatic version (1588?) by Marlowe of a German book entitled *The History of Dr. Faustus, the Notorious Magician and Master of the Black Art* (1587). "He treated the legend as a poet, bringing out with all his power its central thought—man in the pride of knowledge turning from his God" (Morley's *English Writers*, Chap. IX, p. 254).

263 1. **Lovelace**: the hero and villain of *Clarissa Harlowe*. See note on p. 367.

263 (heading). **Thomas Dekker** (1570?-1637?): a London poet and dramatist, who collaborated with Middleton in *The Honest Whore* (1604) and *The Roaring Girl* (1611), with Massinger in *The Virgin Martyr* (1622), with Ford and Rowley in *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621?), and with Webster, Rowley, Chettle, Day, and Haughton in numerous other plays. He wrote alone *Satiro-Mastix*, *The Shoemaker's Holiday, or the Gentle Craft* (1599), *Old Fortunatus* (1600), *Westward Ho!* (before 1605), and many other plays which excel in good shop scenes and those laid in taverns and suburban pleasure houses. He also wrote numerous pamphlets ridiculing the sins and follies of London, e.g. *The Seven Deadly Sins of London* (1606), *News from Hell* (1606), and *The Gull's Hornbook* (1609).

263 5. **Old Fortunatus**, *The Pleasant History of*: a dramatization of a popular European legend of a man who receives from the goddess Fortune a purse which can never be emptied, and who takes from the Sultan a magic hat which transports the wearer wherever he desires. See *Mermaid* ed.

263 25. **Satiro-Mastix**: published in 1602 as a reply to Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*, an attack on Dekker and Marston.

264 7. **an Appian sacrifice**: an allusion to the old Roman legend, found in Livy, of the slaying of Virginia by her father to save her from the lust of the decemvir Appius Claudius. The story is found in early

Italian and French literature, in Chaucer, Gower, Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, and is the subject of plays by Webster, John Dennis, and Knowles.

264 22. **Cervantes** (1547-1616): a celebrated Spanish poet and novelist, author of *Don Quixote* (1605 and 1615). "The hero, Don Quixote de la Mancha, a country gentleman, being imbued with tales of chivalry, sets forth with his squire Sancho Panza in search of knightly adventure with very amusing results." The author's purpose was "to render abhorred of men the false and absurd stories contained in books of chivalry."

264 (heading). **John Marston** (1575?-1634): a London divine, satirist, and playwright, author of *What You Will* (1601?), *Antonio and Mellida* (1602), *The Malcontent* (1604), *The Dutch Courtezan* (1605), and *The Insatiate Countess* (1613), which is also attributed to W. Barksteed. Marston also wrote many poems, and several books of satires in connection with his quarrels with Jonson and Dekker. *Eastward Ho!* he collaborated with Jonson and Chapman in 1605.

266 1. **The Merry Devil of Edmonton**: a comedy acted by the King's Men at the Globe Theater before October 22, 1607. It is attributed by Fleay on internal evidence to Drayton. Kirkman the bookseller ascribed it without reason to Shakespeare. It suggested to Thomas Brewer a prose tract entitled *The Life and Death of the Merry Devil of Edmonton* (1608).

266 12. **Michael Drayton** (1563-1631): author of "the enormous *Poly-olbion*," a geographical poem on Great Britain, consisting of thirty "songs" filled with a mass of antiquarian knowledge and fanciful and elaborate descriptions with much superadded ornament. He is also the author of *The Barons' Wars*, *England's Heroical Epistles*, the fairy poem *Nymphidia*, *The Battle of Agincourt*, etc. See Saintsbury's *Elizabethan Literature*, pp. 139-144.

266 (heading). **Thomas Heywood**: a seventeenth-century dramatist and miscellaneous writer of pageants, didactic poems, and translations from Sallust and other classic authors. Besides the plays mentioned in the text, he wrote *The Four Prentices of London* (1600?), *Edward IV*, *If You Knew Not Me, You Knew Nobody* (1606), *The Golden Age* (1611), *The Fair Maid of the West* (acted in 1617), etc.

266 19. **The Fair Maid of the Exchange**: printed in 1607. Saintsbury pronounces it "a lively picture of contemporary manners" though "full of improbability."

267 11. **A Woman Killed with Kindness**: acted in March, 1603. It is generally considered Heywood's best play. The plot is not admirable,

though it involves situations of deep pathos. "A deceived husband, coming to the knowledge of his shame, drives his rival to repentance, and his wife to repentance and death, by his charity" (Saintsbury).

267 11-12. a sort of prose Shakespeare. "There is no doubt that some harm has been done to Thomas Heywood by the enthusiastic phrase in which Lamb described him as 'a prose Shakespeare.' . . . 'A prose Shakespeare' suggests to incautious readers something like Swift, like Taylor, like Carlyle, — something approaching in prose the supremacy of Shakespeare in verse. But obviously that is not what Lamb meant. . . . What Heywood has in common with Shakespeare, though his prosaic rather than poetic treatment brings it out in a much less brilliant way, is his sympathy with ordinary and domestic character, his aversion from the fantastic vices which many of his fellows were prone to attribute to their characters, his humanity, his kindness" (Saintsbury's *Elizabethan Literature*, pp. 279, 280).

268 22. Castaly: an English form of Castalia, a fountain of Apollo and the Muses, which flows from Mount Parnassus in Greece.

269 5. Amurath, or Murad. Between 1359 and 1640 there were four Sultans of Turkey by that name. On ascending the throne, each Sultan murdered all his brothers. See *Henry V*.

269 27. "Rosalian Strain." See note on "Master Betty," p. 367.

269 27. Alleyn, Edward (1566-1626): one of the two greatest tragic actors of his time. In conjunction with Philip Henslowe he built the Fortune Theater in 1600 and acted there at the head of the Lord Admiral's company. He was the founder of Dulwich College.

269 31. The Brazen Age: a tragedy written in 1613.

270 1. Meleager: the son of Æneus, king of Calydon, a city in Greece. He slew a wild boar sent by Diana to lay waste the country, and the brothers of his mother Althea fell in battle by his hand. Out of revenge his mother caused his death by burning an extinguished brand, on the preservation of which his life depended.

270 8-9. the dying wife of Shore in Rowe. Jane Shore is accused of witchcraft and is condemned to wander about in a sheet, with a taper in her hand, without food or shelter.

271 (heading). Thomas Middleton (1570-1627): the author of numerous plays, masques, prose pamphlets, and miscellaneous verse. He did some work in serious romantic comedy, but excelled in realistic comedy. Among his best plays are: *Michaelmas Term*, *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, *More Dissemblers besides Women*, *Women beware Women*, *A Game at Chess*, *The Witch*, and *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*. *A Fair Quarrel*, *The Changeling*, and *The Spanish Gipsy* were

collaborated with Rowley; *The Old Law* with Massinger and Rowley; *The Roaring Girl* with Dekker; and many other plays with Munday, Drayton, Webster, Jonson, and Fletcher. For an admirable criticism of Middleton by Swinburne, see *Mermaid* ed.

271 26. **A Fair Quarrel** (1617). "But high above all the works yet mentioned," says Swinburne, "there stands and will stand conspicuous while noble emotion and noble verse have honour among English readers, the pathetic and heroic play so memorably appreciated by Charles Lamb, *A Fair Quarrel*. It would be the vainest and emptiest impertinence to offer a word in echo of his priceless and imperishable praise" (*Thomas Middleton*, Vol. I, p. xx).

272 28. **Captain Ager.** The scenes of quarrel and reconciliation between him and the Colonel deservedly rank high for their "impetuosity and vigour, combined with very rough swift verse, and for their easy ascension to impossible heights of magnanimity, audacity, or resignation" (Ellis).

273 (heading). **William Rowley**: a seventeenth-century actor and playwright. Almost nothing is known of his life except that he was an actor in the Duke of York's company and wrote plays in collaboration with Middleton, Dekker, Ford, Massinger, and others. Only four plays by him alone are extant, — *A New Wonder* (1632), *A Match at Midnight* (1633), *All 's Lost by Lust* (1633), and *A Shoemaker a Gentleman* (1638). "He was a fitful and irregular artist, weak in plot construction, but showing flashes of sudden inspiration, and delighting in all the manifestations of strong passion" (Ellis).

273 25. **the Wife of Bath**: one of Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims. See Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*. Of the high comedy of the scene between Livia and the widow, Swinburne says, "It is not indeed unworthy of the comparison with Chaucer's which it suggested to the all but impeccable judgment of Charles Lamb."

275 (heading). **Cyril Tourneur**: a tragic poet who flourished about 1600-1613. He was the author of an allegorical poem and an elegy on the death of Prince Henry, but his fame rests on the two tragedies mentioned by Lamb. He cultivated rugged satire and fierce tragedy.

275 4. **The Atheist's Tragedy**; or, *The Honest Man's Revenge*. Fleay conjectures that it was acted between 1601 and 1604, and printed in 1611. It was based on a story in Boccaccio's *Decameron*, VII, 6. It is pronounced by Saintsbury "an inextricable imbroglio of tragic and comic scenes and characters."

275 11. **The Revengers' Tragedy**: licensed and printed in 1607. Saintsbury says that it shows a touch of genius both in conception and

execution, but is marred by the improbability of the action and the inartistic prodigality of blood and horrors.

275 (heading). **John Webster**: a seventeenth-century dramatist of whose life little is known, except that he was an industrious collaborator with Dekker, Drayton, Middleton, and others. He had "the incommutable gift of the highest poetry in scattered phrases," and the power of producing "pity and terror by the exhibition of the unprevented but not unavenged sufferings of female virtue" (Saintsbury). His fame rests on four tragedies,—*The Duchess of Malfi* (or *Malfy*), *The White Devil*, *The Devil's Law Case*, and *Appius and Virginia*.

275 23. **The Duchess of Malfy**: a tragedy first acted about 1612. The plot turns upon the secret marriage of the duchess with her steward, which leads to her insanity and death. See Gosse's *Seventeenth Century Studies*, p. 55.

276 15. **The White Devil**, or *Vittoria Corombona*: a tragedy first acted about 1607 and printed in 1612. It is Webster's masterpiece, and is highly praised for its wonderful flashes of poetry and its powerful portraiture of the characters of Vittoria, Flamineo, and Brachiano. See Saintsbury's *Elisabethan Literature*, pp. 274-276, and Symonds's Introduction to *Webster and Tourneur* in the Mermaid ed.

276 29. the funeral dirge in this play. See V, iv.

276 30-277 1. the ditty which reminds Ferdinand, etc. See *The Tempest*, I, ii, 376 *seq.*

277 13-14. **Titus Andronicus**: a noble Roman general against the Goths, the hero of a "drama of blood" produced in 1594 and variously attributed to Marlowe, Kyd, and Shakespeare.

277 (heading). **John Ford** (1586-1639): the author of several gloomy tragedies, every one of which presents "the burden of a passionate and heavy-laden heart,— all for love, and the world well lost." See Ellis's Introduction to *John Ford*, Mermaid ed.

277 17-18. **Contention of a Bird and a Musician**. The passage is found in *The Lover's Melancholy* (printed 1629), I, i. Ford's reference is *Famis Stradam*, lib. ii, Prolus, 6, Acad. 2, *Imitat. Claudian*.

277 19-20. **Crashaw**, Richard (1616-1650): an anti-Puritan poet of the school of Herrick, Carew, and Herbert. His religious and secular poems were published in three collections,—*Steps to the Temple*, *The Delights of the Muses*, and *Carmen Deo Nostro*.

277 20. **Ambrose Philips** (1671-1749): a writer of considerable note, author of *Pastorals* (published in Tonson's *Miscellanies*, Vol. VI) and several plays, the best known being *The Distrest Mother*. Doran mentions him among the wits at Button's coffeehouse, where he received

the nickname of Namby Pamby on account of "his eminence in the infantile style."

278 4. **Calantha**: the heroine of *The Broken Heart* (1633). The scene referred to is in V, ii, where in the midst of a grand court dance Calantha is successively informed of the deaths of her father Amyclas, king of Laconia, Penthea, her prospective sister-in-law, and Ithocles, her betrothed lover. Both Hazlitt and Saintsbury do not share Lamb's admiration for Calantha's death scene for three reasons: viz. that it is borrowed from Marston's *Malcontent*, is wholly unnatural, and that the crowning point is not Calantha's "sentimental inconsistency," but "the consistent and noble death of Orgilus," the betrothed lover of Penthea, who is condemned for murdering Ithocles. See Saintsbury's *Elizabethan Literature*, pp. 404-407.

279 (heading). **Fulke Greville, Lord Brook** (1554-1628). See note on p. 335.

279 22-23. "Much like thy riddle," etc.: from Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, ll. 1016, 1017.

280 (heading). **Ben Jonson** (1573?-1637): "Rare Ben Jonson," the great poet, critic, and dramatist. He created the comedy of manners, which aimed to delineate realistically and satirically the humors, i.e. "the extravagant habits, passions, or affectations," of the lower classes. Among his best plays, in addition to those mentioned by Lamb, are *Every Man in his Humour*, *The Silent Woman*, *Bartholomew Fair*, *Volpone*; or, *The Fox*, *The Poetaster*, and the classical tragedies *Sejanus* and *Catiline*.

280 10. **Platonic affection**: the pure spiritual friendship of man and woman advocated by Plato, in contradistinction to what is commonly called love.

280 11. **Chrysophilites**: the typical miser, from two Greek words meaning literally "gold lover."

280 13. **Creusa**: the wife of *Æneas*, who was lost from her husband on the night when Troy was taken. See Virgil's *Æneid*, II, 562 seq.

280 14. **the Cave of Mammon**. See note on p. 321.

280 14-15. **Barabas's contemplation of his wealth**. See Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, I, i.

280 15-16. **Luke's raptures**. Luke is the hypocritical brother-in-law of Lady Frugal in Massinger's *City Madam* (1632). He is raised from indigence to enormous wealth by a bequest of his brother Sir John Frugal, a retired merchant.

280 18. **Guzman d'Alfarache**: the hero of a Spanish romance, *The Spanish Rogue* (1599), by Mateo Aleman. From being a dupe, he becomes a swindler, student, merchant, etc. The story probably suggested to

Le Sage his famous *Life of Gil Blas*. "Ruddocks," "pistolets," "Portuguese," and "pieces of eight" are names of old coins.

280 31. **The Poetaster**; or, *His Arraignment* (1602): a satiric comedy by Ben Jonson, thought to be an attack on Dekker and Marston.

281 3-4. **Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Tibullus**: poets of the age of the Roman emperor Augustus (63 B.C.-14 A.D.), under whom Latin literature reached its highest point.

281 29. **The huge Xercean army**: the host with which Xerxes (519-465 B.C.), king of Persia, invaded Greece. Lemprière says that, including the retinue of servants, eunuchs, and women that attended it, the army amounted to 5,283,220 souls.

281 30. **Achilles**: the bravest of the Greeks at the siege of Troy.

282 2. **Sir Samson Legend**: a character in Congreve's comedy, *Love for Love* (1695).

282 (heading). **George Chapman** (1559-1634): a London poet and dramatist, chiefly celebrated for his translation of Homer. His principal plays are *All Fools* (1605), *Bussy d'Ambois* (1607), *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois* (1613), and *The Conspiracy and Tragedy of Charles, Duke of Byron* (1608). His tragedies are ponderous and didactic with something of the bombastic force and sweep of Marlowe, and his comedies are formless and deal with ignoble motives and passions.

283 (heading). **Francis Beaumont** (1584-1616) and **John Fletcher** (1579-1625). These two eminent poets and dramatists were intimate friends, and lived together near the Globe Theater, sharing everything in common, and writing together from about 1606 to 1616. The principal plays which they wrote jointly are *The Woman Hater*, *The Maid's Tragedy*, *Philaster*, *A King and No King*, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, *Cupid's Revenge*, and *The Coxcomb*.

286 24. **Troilus**: a young Greek prince in Shakespeare's tragedy *Troilus and Cressida* (about 1601).

286 24. **Timon**. See note on p. 378.

286 33. **the Battle of the Books** (1697): a satirical work by Dean Swift in which the ancient books fight against the modern books in St. James's Library. It was Swift's contribution to the famous Bentley-Boyle controversy regarding the merits of the ancient and the modern writers. The Blackmore mentioned as exchanging gifts with the Roman poet Lucan (39-65 A.D.), author of the epic poem *Pharsalia*, was Sir Richard (1650?-1729), physician to William III, and author of miscellaneous poetical and prose works.

287 21. **Juno Lucina**: the Roman goddess who presided over the birth of children.

287 20. **Pope has been praised, etc.**: a reference to the description of the game of ombre in *The Rape of the Lock*, Canto ii.

287 (heading). **Philip Massinger** (1583–1640). He was the sole author of fourteen plays, and wrote twenty-four others with Field, Daborne, Dekker, Tourneur, and Fletcher. The most important of his plays are *The Duke of Milan* (1623), *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (1632), *The Maid of Honour* (1632), *The Roman Actor*, and *The City Madam*. “Massinger has a fertile and varied imagination, a command of dignified and harmonious blank verse, but is fond of sudden turns and twists of situation” (Saintsbury).

288 (heading). **James Shirley** (1596–1666): the last of the Elizabethan dramatists, author of at least thirty-nine plays of a half-humorous, half-romantic type. *The Lady of Pleasure* (1637) is considered his best comedy, while *The Traitor* (1635) is the most powerful and pathetic of his tragedies.

289 12–13. **The Provoked Husband** (1726): a comedy begun by Sir John Vanbrugh (1666–1726) under the name of *A Journey to London*, and finished by Colley Cibber.

Review Questions. 1. In the notes on Marlowe, what is meant by “Cambyses’ vein”? 2. What is Lamb’s estimate of *Edward II*? 3. What is his analysis of the character of Barabas? 4. What is his estimate of *Doctor Faustus*? 5. Study the criticism of Orleans. 6. What points of resemblance are found between Andrugio and King Lear? 7. Compare Lamb’s theory about clothes with Carlyle’s in *Sartor Resartus*. 8. What especially pleased Lamb in *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*? 9. Explain the statement that “Heywood is a sort of prose Shakespeare.” 10. What is Lamb’s estimate of Heywood as a man? 11. Compare the witches in *Macbeth* with the witch in Middleton’s play. 12. What is Lamb’s appreciation of *The Revengers’ Tragedy*? 13. What is his estimate of Webster’s tragic power? 14. What did Lamb find admirable in Calantha’s character? 15. What is said of Jonson’s classical scholarship? 16. Discuss the type of character represented by Epicure Mammon. 17. What is Lamb’s estimate of the genius of Chapman?

XXXVI. ON THE GENIUS AND CHARACTER OF
HOGARTH

Leigh Hunt's *Reflector*, 1811

289 (title). **Hogarth**, William (1697-1764): a celebrated English painter and engraver. In 1733 he published the "Harlot's Progress," and soon afterwards the "Rake's Progress." A set of these prints, Ainger tells us, was among "the treasures of the old house at Blakesware, and Lamb as a child had spelled through their grim and ghastly histories again and again, till he came to know every figure and incident in them by heart." Among Hogarth's other pictures are "Marriage à la Mode," "The Distressed Poet," "The Enraged Musician," "Industry and Idleness." An admirable essay on the "Marriage à la Mode" by William Hazlitt, a friend of Lamb and a far greater art critic, closes with these words: "Of the pictures in the 'Rake's Progress' we shall not here say anything, because we think them, on the whole, inferior to the prints, and because they have already been criticised by a writer, to whom we could add nothing, in a paper which ought to be read by every lover of Hogarth and of English genius."

290 20. **Timon of Athens**. See note on p. 378.

291 2. **Lear's beginning madness**. See *King Lear*, III, iv.

293 2. **Ferdinand Count Fathom**: a novel by Smollett (1753). The hero is a villain who robs his benefactors and dies in misery and despair.

293 10-11. **Sir Joshua Reynolds** (1723-1792): a distinguished English portrait painter. He was intimately associated with Dr. Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, and Garrick, and it was at his suggestion that "The Club" was founded. He was the first president of the Royal Academy, and his *Discourses* were lectures delivered before that body. He was the author of three essays in *The Idler* and was painter to the king.

293 22. **Poussin**, Nicolas (1594-1665): a noted French historical and landscape painter. His pictures are found in all the art galleries of Europe, among the principal being "The Deluge," "Plague of the Philistines," "Rape of the Sabines," "Moses," "Triumph of Truth," and "The Plague at Athens."

293 26-27. **the scenes of their own St. Giles's**. St. Giles is a locality in London, northeast of Westminster, and has been long noted as a center of vice and poverty.

294 10. **Michael Angelo** (1475-1564): a famous Italian sculptor, painter, architect, and poet. Lamb doubtless had in mind the frescoes

in the Sistine Chapel in Rome, which depict the terrors of the Last Judgment.

296 1. **Ugolino**: the count of Gheradesca, leader of the Guelphs in Pisa, who was starved to death with his two sons and two grandsons in "The Tower of Famine" by the Archbishop Ruggieri. Dante in the *Inferno* represents Ugolino devouring the head of his enemy, who is frozen in the lake of ice.

296 2. **Beaufort**, Cardinal and Chancellor Henry (d. 1447): president of the court which sentenced Joan of Arc to the stake. See the closing portion of De Quincey's essay on *Joan of Arc*.

296 10. **Gorgonian looks**. See note on p. 353.

297 3. **The Boys under Demoniacial Possession**. In the famous painting of the "Transfiguration" by Raphael (1483-1520) in the Vatican at Rome, Christ floats in glory attended by Moses and Elias above a group of apostles, while below the people bring a boy possessed of an evil spirit to the remaining apostles for relief.

297 3. **Raphael Sanzio**: a celebrated Italian painter. Among his world-renowned works are the "Sistine Madonna" in Dresden, the "Transfiguration," "The Marriage of the Virgin" in Milan, "La Belle Jardinière," "St. George and the Dragon," and "St. Michael" in the Louvre, and the "Vision of Ezekiel" in Florence.

297 4. **Dominichino Zampieri** (1581-1641). See note on p. 342.

298 24. **Venice Preserved**. See note on p. 357.

298 28. **Titian** (1477-1576): a celebrated Italian painter. Among his chief paintings are "Sacred and Profane Love" in Rome, "Bacchus and Ariadne" in London, "Ecce Homo" in Madrid, and "Christ Crowned with Thorns" in Paris.

301 26. **Mr. Barry**, James (1741-1806): an Irish painter of historical and mythological subjects. On account of his violent temper he was expelled from his professorship in the Royal Academy.

304 1-2. **graces of an Antinous**: the statue of the Emperor Hadrian's favorite page Antinous in the Capitoline Museum, Rome. It represents a beautiful nude youth with bowed head and melancholy look. **An Apollo**: the Apollo Belvedere, a famous statue in the Vatican, Rome. It represents a graceful youth undraped except for a chlamys which is clasped around his neck and thrown over his left arm, which is extended.

304 4. **Burke**, Edmund (1729-1797): the great statesman and orator, author of an essay on *The Sublime and the Beautiful*, *Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontents*, *Speech on Conciliation with America*, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, etc.

304 30. **West, Benjamin** (1738-1820): an eminent historical and portrait painter, who was born in Pennsylvania, resided in London after 1763, and succeeded Reynolds as president of the Royal Academy. His most noted paintings are "The Death of Wolfe," "Battle of La Hogue," "Death on the Pale Horse," "Alexander the Great and his Physicians," and "Penn's Treaty with the Indians."

305 16. **Juvenal** (about 60-140 A.D.), a Roman satirical poet of the age of Trajan; **Persius** (34-62 A.D.), a Roman satirical poet of the time of Nero. He has been ably edited by Professor Gildersleeve.

307 28-30. **Tom Jones . . . Blifil**: characters in Fielding's novel *Tom Jones*. See note on p. 364.

307 31-32. **Strap . . . Random**: characters in Smollett's novel *Roderick Random*. See note on p. 345.

307 33. **Parson Adams**: a country clergyman in Fielding's novel *Joseph Andrews* (1742). His character is a mixture of simplicity, girlish modesty, unswerving integrity, benevolence, genuine piety, solid learning, and boldness in the cause of truth.

310 13. **a Dodgingtonian smoothness**: George Bubb Dodington [correct spelling], Baron Melcombe (1691-1762), a British politician, who acquired while in Parliament the reputation of an assiduous place hunter. He patronized men of letters, was complimented by Young, Fielding, and Bentley, ridiculed by Churchill and Pope, and introduced by Hogarth into the picture called the "Orders of Periwigs."

311 12-13. **Sir Hugh Evans**: a pedantic Welsh parson and schoolmaster of extraordinary simplicity and native shrewdness in Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Henderson says, "I have seen John Edwin (1750-1790) in Sir Hugh Evans, when preparing for the duel, keep the house in an ecstasy of merriment for many minutes together without speaking a word."

311 17. **Judith**: the heroine of the opera mentioned, which is based on the *Book of Judith* in the *Apocrypha*. In order to deliver her native city, Bethulia, she gains admission, through her great beauty, to the tent of the besieging general, Holofernes, and beheads him in his drunken stupor. The story is also the subject of an old English poem dating from about the eighth century. See Morley's *English Writers*, Vol. II, p. 180.

311 20. "Music yet was young." Cf. Collins's *Ode on the Passions* (1746).

311 26-27. **Uncle Toby and Mr. Shandy**: characters in Laurence Sterne's novel *Tristram Shandy* (9 vols., 1760-1767). For the passage about the hobby-horse, see Book I, Chap. XXIV.

311 29. **Raphael.** See note on p. 398. **Correggio**, Antonio Allegri da (1494-1534), "a great Italian painter of the Lombard school, unexcelled in his mastery of the difficulties of foreshortening and the management of light and shade with a multitude of figures" (Perkins). His most noted paintings are "Night" and "The Reading Magdalen" in Dresden, "Antiope" and "Marriage of St. Catharine" in Paris, "The Ascension" and "St. Jerome" in Parma, and the "Ecce Homo" in London.

Review Questions. 1. What parallel is drawn between the "Rake's Progress" and *Timon of Athens*? 2. What is Lamb's defense of Hogarth against the charge of coarseness and vulgarity? 3. Compare "Gin Lane" with "The Plague at Athens." 4. Why does Lamb prefer Hogarth's realistic to Reynolds's romantic pictures? 5. How has Hogarth united the serious and the comic? 6. What is said of the human countenance in Hogarth's drawings? 7. What does Coleridge say of his female faces? 8. What does Lamb say of his portraits of children? 9. Give Barry's criticism of Hogarth's drawings, and Lamb's reply. 10. Observe the tone of Lamb's comparison of Hogarth and Penny. 11. What does Lamb admire in the "Election Entertainment"?

XXXVII. ON THE POETICAL WORKS OF GEORGE WITHER

"That Lamb was a poet," says Ainger, "is at the root of his greatness as a critic; and his own judgments of poetry show the same sanity to which he points in his poetical brethren. He is never so impulsive or discursive that he fails to show how unerring is his judgment on all points connected with the poet's art. There had been those before Lamb, for example, who had quoted and called attention to the poetry of George Wither; but no one had thought of noticing that his metre was also that of Ambrose Philips, and that Pope and his friends had only proved their own defective ear by seeking to make it ridiculous."

312 (title). **George Wither** (1588-1667): an English poet, author of *The Shepherd's Hunting, Fidelia, The Motto, Fair Virtue; or, The Mistress of Philarete*, and *Abuses Stript and Whipt*, a satire. He was educated at Oxford, became a Royalist captain of horse in an expedition against the Covenanters, and during the Civil War was a major in the Parliamentary Army.

313 14. **Shaftesbury** (1621-1683), first Earl of, Anthony Ashley Cooper: satirized as Achitophel in Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681).

313 14. **Villiers, George** (1627-1688), second Duke of Buckingham: satirized as Zimri in the same poem.

313 15. **Wharton, Thomas** (1640?-1715), Marquis of Wharton: the reputed author of the Irish political song *Lillibullero*, satirizing James II. He was a member of Parliament and the Junto.

314 7-8. "soaring in the high region of his fancies," etc.: from the Preface to the second book of Milton's *Reason of Church Government Urged against Prelacy* (1642).

314 31-32. "sweet uses of adversity," etc. See *As You Like It*, II, i, 12.

315 4-5. **the Marshalsea**: a prison in Southwark, London, connected with the court of the same name, which was the seat of the marshal of the king's household. The prison was used latterly for debtors, and was abolished in 1849. After the Restoration Wither was imprisoned there, but was released in 1663.

318 7. **Ambrose Philips** (1671-1749). See note on pp. 393, 394.

Review Questions. 1. What is said of Wither's self-eulogy? 2. Compare his satire with that of Dryden and Pope. 3. Note the aptness of the citation from Bunyan. 4. In what respects does Lamb compare Wither with Robert Burns? 5. Find a beautifully balanced sentence in the fifth paragraph. 6. Examine this paragraph with respect to unity, mass, and coherence. 7. What is said in praise of Wither's meter? 8. What impression does this essay leave of Lamb's gift of interpretation?

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